THE

# CHRISTIAN REFORMER.

No. CLXII.] JUNE, 1858. [Vol. XIV.

## A MINISTER'S RETROSPECT.

### Chapter XIV.

### HOW THE PAST POINTS TO THE FUTURE.

I have nothing more in the way of personal detail that I can think sufficiently important to offer to the public. Perhaps, indeed, I have already inflicted upon my readers more of such particulars than they may have thought important or valuable. My life has in truth been wholly undistinguished by adventure, and not much by stirring incident. It is therefore only as an illustrative record of a minister's ordinary life and service, that I fancied it could have any use or interest; and as such, I have felt so lively a pleasure in retracing the long past, that I fear I may have sometimes let my own gossiping impulse carry me too far. If so, I crave pardon of the tired reader, and promise soon to finish.

I still sit the greater part of the day in my old arm-chair, just as I did when I began my story nine months ago. Friends are still as true, and family love as gently assiduous as ever. I rise no later, nor go to bed any earlier, nor have an ache or pain more than at the time to which I have referred;—except that my rheumatism seemed worse in the late cold weather than in previous winters (perhaps the winter was colder than usual). I have not an earthly wish ungratified; not a mortal fear to trouble me. I thank God from my heart that the lines have fallen to me in such pleasant places, and only pray that so goodly a heritage on earth may not dim my further prospect, which cannot in the course of nature be very remote. I have been uncommonly happy while dictating these desultory notices of my past life; so much so, that I confess myself loth to draw to an end. I shall have to look out for some equally gentle stimulant in the way of intellectual exercise; for it has done me good, in bodily and mental health, if it has done good to no one else. It is quite time, nevertheless, to make an end of the matter, and this shall be my last chapter. I shall devote it to a cursory review of the developement and influence of English Unitarianism during the last half-century or thereabouts, and to the expression of

my own deliberate hopes and anticipations as founded upon the past. I believe the history of the Christian Church does not present a more interesting or important half-century of theological thought and practical religious effort arising out of it, than the past half-century in England, in which beyond a doubt Unitarianism and Unitarians have played the most effective and often the most conspicuous part.

The account which I gave of the state of religious opinion among my first congregation on my settlement with them, is applicable to the bulk of our congregations at that date. They were without exception unorthodox; some moderately Arian, but most of them simply Unitarian in belief, and beginning to adopt, or to receive, the name Unitarian as more properly descriptive than Presbyterian. Among the ministers there was generally (as was natural and right) a still clearer and more decided theological conviction; and this was unmistakably Unitarian. All the men of my own age and most of my elder brethren were decided Unitarians in doctrine. Some were more zealous preachers of doctrinal religion than others, according to their varying taste, temperament and circumstances; but simple Unitarian Christianity was the foundation of morals and devotion as preached by them all.

Closely connected with the Biblical theology of a well-educated minister, in their influence upon his mind and his public teaching, are his metaphysical and ethical opinions. Most of my contemporaries adopted the philosophy of Locke and Hartley. Some, of the elders especially, had brought a few "innate ideas" and "instinctive principles" from the Scotch Universities; but we all—at least all who claimed to be thinkers—read Priestley's metaphysical as well as his theological writings; and while his opinions on many subjects were looked upon with great diversity of feeling, most of us sided with him in his observations on the Scotch philosophy, though all regretted the supercilious tone of his letters to Reid, Beattie and Oswald. Priestley's republication of Hartley's Philosophy, disencumbered of its lumbering materialistic Vibration theory, which had been its self-imposed obstacle ever since it was issued by its author (not to mention Priestley's admirable explanatory Essays prefixed), had been greatly influential in promoting the reception of the grand theory of Association of Ideas among thinking men, of our class especially; and I believe there was scarcely one among my intimates, professing to study mental philosophy at all, who was not a decided Hartleyan.

There was far less general agreement among us on the two subjects which chiefly occupied Priestley's pen with metaphysical speculation and controversy,—those of Necessity and Materialism. As for Materialism, he had few thorough disciples, so far as my knowledge and recollection justify me in speaking;

for where the idea was connected with biblical rather than metaphysical arguments, the views so sustained would have been contemptuously disowned by Priestley. There were ministers among us (whom, however, I could not consider as philosophers) who held very strong, but very indistinct, ideas of a bodily resurrection and future state, which they thought they could prove by the history of the bodily resurrection and subsequent manifestations of Jesus Christ. These were not however Priestleyan metaphysicians, though Priestley too thought that his metaphysical ideas were sanctioned by the Scriptures. They were not *philosophical* materialists like him; nor were their views held by any among our ministers of larger education. Most of us held to the old idea of an immaterial soul or spirit (the name for the thinking and feeling principle) connected with the body, yet separable from it and not mortal in its death. Our doctrine was called Immaterialism or Spiritualism, and we were the Immaterialists or Spiritualists of our day, as distinguished from its Materialism and Materialists by properly correlative terms. I may here be allowed, as an old man used to the old terms of old controversies, to complain of a modern misappropriation (as I consider it) of the term Spiritual, by which it is now made to denote a certain mode of thought, which is no more specially immaterialistic than that against which it seems by implication to impute the charge of materialism. I quite lost my way when first I resumed (as I supposed) the study of the Spiritualistic controversy under (as I expected) its modern lights; and presently I felt offended (Hartleyan as I am excepting the vibrations) at finding myself considered by implication a materialistic and non-spiritual philosopher. But to return. To myself, Priestley's materialism seemed of a very spiritual order after all, when I found him insisting that Matter is destitute of solidity or impenetrability (which is usually defined as one of its essential attributes), and that it possesses no other essential properties besides extension, attraction and repulsion.* And when I found him not only etherealizing Matter to the utmost, but quoting expressions from his opponents, in which they seemed to ascribe extension to the soul or spirit (if not attraction and repulsion also), I began to feel something of contempt for the whole question, as either a mere dispute about words, or one in which words were very idly used on both sides; and I was glad to fall back upon the evidence of my senses to prove my own bodily existence, and that of my consciousness to tell me that I am something besides bodily sensation.

On the Necessarian question we were more equally divided, though I do not think the majority was with the great leader. But almost every man had an opinion on this subject. The

* Disquis. on Matter and Spirit, Sect. ii.

Price and Priestley discussion had almost compelled the middle-aged men of my young days to take sides with one or other of those able disputants in their exemplary discussion. And the former had, I should say, quite as many adherents as the latter. Among the avowed Necessarians, too, I could not fail to notice that very few were so thorough-going as Priestley in the attempt to carry out their philosophy into its practical results. While he stoutly maintained that a man ought to find in the Necessarian philosophy the best motives both of action and of endurance, exciting pity and suggesting excuses for evil-doers, forgiveness towards enemies, and the hope of universal restoration for the wicked hereafter, most of the Necessarians of my acquaintance were (as seemed to me) more wisely content to regard the theory as a mere abstraction, incapable of being admitted into the practical morals of life, or sure to be misapplied if the attempt were generally made. Such men adopted the practical ethics of Libertarianism while holding the abstract metaphysics of Necessity. And I still believe they were right on their own grounds. The theory of Philosophical Necessity, so held, is neither more nor less than the theory of an all-embracing Providence; while the ethics of Liberty do not preclude this latter theory, but only forbid us to confuse our conscious free-will by any imaginary reference to the fore-knowledge of Providence, which fore-knowledge is not fore-known to us, and can be no legitimate motive to us. My own deliberate philosophy was of this mixed kind. Beginning my study of the question with strong predilections in favour of the theory of free-will, I followed its advocates to the point where they are on the verge of denying fore-knowledge to the Deity. I felt I must stop here; and soon felt, too, that the Necessarian was right in his theory of Divine fore-knowledge and (in the true metaphysical sense of the word) fore-appointment; that theory being merely taken, however, to represent the universe as it may be supposed to lie open before the view of the Divine Being himself, or of Milton's high angels possibly, who discuss "fix'd fate, free-will, fore-knowledge absolute." But it was plain to me that this imagined Divine view of things never could nor ought to enter into human views of motive or consequence; whence I concluded that Necessity is a true abstract theory, but of no practical use or value; and that Libertarianism is a true ethical position, leading to most important practical applications. I have rarely met a Necessarian of the genuine Priestley stamp, who lived his theory out to the degree that Priestley did. But I knew many who, like myself, held its metaphysical abstraction to be irrefragably true, while practically false and inapplicable to the guidance of life. Just so, I have known Berkleyans who maintained with the ingenious Bishop that there is no valid proof of the existence of an outward universe, but freely confessed, like men of prac-

tical common sense, that they could not possibly live out the theory, and did not attempt it.

It was generally felt by my contemporaries as a great damage to the cause of Christian Unitarianism that Dr. Priestley should have so earnestly endeavoured to identify it with his philosophical views of Necessity and Materialism. He called them "equally parts of one system," though he admitted that each stands upon its own independent foundation and is capable of separate defence. And when Mr. Belsham, the next prominent advocate of Unitarianism after Priestley, had further cemented the arbitrary union of these independent philosophies and theologies by his numerous writings on Unitarianism, Necessity and Materialism, the orthodox world was scarcely to be blamed for believing the philosophy to be part of the religion, though our own Dr. Channing was less easily acquitted of idle prejudice against the English Unitarians on this score. The prejudice is only now wearing away, when perhaps we may not be far from incurring it afresh, if on the track of our modern intuitionalism some new Priestley should as stoutly fall as the former did upon the old innate ideas. How is it (I have often asked myself with wonder and shame) that metaphysical science seems to do little more than run the round of a circuit, returning ever and anon upon the exploded fallacies of the age but one before? In physical science, an error once proved and abandoned can scarcely again rear its head. The earth once moving round the sun in books of philosophy, can never again stand still as centre of the universe. Magic and witchcraft once abandoned, not even mesmerism and table-turning can defy the explanation of admitted laws and forces. But Innate Ideas vanish to return again. The Associative principle is established, to be scornfully ignored again as unimportant.

The moral philosophy connected with the speculative views which I have described as prevalent among my contemporaries, was such as easily and naturally harmonized with the principles of Christian duty and expectation; and it was the more frequent inculcation of Christian morals with something like fulness and completeness, such as was quite unknown in more orthodox churches, that earned for the Unitarian ministry the distinguished reproach of "moral preaching." Long may they deserve it! I am happy to think that some other churches are now more freely incurring it than they used to do. We have been also called utilitarian in morals; and might contentedly bear that imputation in company with him who promised that God will render unto every man according to his deeds. Our philosophy has even been called selfish and self-regarding; and in the same sense (or with the same abuse of meaning) must his exposition of social duty be condemned as selfish who said, "When thou makest a feast, call not thy rich neighbours, lest they bid thee

again, and a recompence be made thee; but call the poor, the blind, the halt, the lame, and thou shalt be blessed; for *they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.*" This "religious utilitarianism" felt itself strong alike on the grounds of Philosophy and of Christianity; and it was our acceptance of a philosophy so intelligible in connection with a Christianity so simple and rational, that taught us to consider moral preaching the chief part of gospel preaching. This moral philosophy (of which Hartley's Rule of Life is full) took more exact shape in due time in the hands of William Jevons* on the grounds of natural religion simply, and of Lant Carpenter† with the added sanctions of Christianity made express and prominent; and whether I compared their books (to which I must add the ethical writings of Dr. Cogan) with the metaphysical principles of those whom I had adopted as my guides, or contrasted them with other books of avowed Christian ethics based on more orthodox principles, I felt with religious thankfulness how reasonable was my gospel and how Christian my philosophy. I might adopt, as applicable to my retrospect, the words of a recent able defender of the Philosophy of Locke and Hartley: "When we compared together such writers as Locke, Cumberland, Law, Hartley, Tucker, Paley" [Austin and even Bentham are names too recent for my date], "we perceived them to agree in the following fundamental principles: that the will of God is the fountain of moral obligation; that the tendency of actions to ultimate happiness is an index to the tacit commands of God, or the chief guide to the knowledge of His will; that the Deity wills the happiness of His creatures, therefore the means of that happiness, therefore virtue, which is the employment of the means; that the dictates of natural and revealed religion, and the dictates of right reason and the principles of utility, suggest the same rule of life and coalesce in their instruction; that rational and refined self-interest, and the truths or principles of religion, natural and revealed, point to one and the same course of life, to the culture of the same private and public affections, the discharge of the same social obligations and duties; or, what is the same thing, the pursuit of the same end, namely, the happiness of mankind." (Locke's Writings and Philosophy historically considered, by Edward Tagart, F.S.A., F.L.S., pp. 469, 470.)

But there is yet another department of philosophy in which I have all my life felt that Unitarians were perhaps still more effectively serving the cause of pure scriptural religion,—I mean that of natural or physical science. In proportion as these studies must always be more prevalent than abstract metaphysical

---

* Systematic Morality.

† Systematic Education, Vol. II., and Principles of Education.

inquiries, it will be in connection with them chiefly that a contradiction will be felt to exist between natural and revealed religion, or that their reconcilement will be seen. And, in point of fact, orthodoxy has continually looked upon Science and Revelation as irreconcilable, while Unitarianism has genially followed and welcomed every step of advancing physical science. In my early days, scarcely a man could be found intimately connected with the Church of England or with orthodox Dissent, who had any pretension to be called a scientific man. Such men were of no denomination, or else they were Unitarians. Priestley, with his daring chemical investigations, was a warning example (or else an instance to be proud of) of the natural connection between habits of free scientific thought and experiment and religious heresy. The young science of Geology soon became a sharper touchstone still. Orthodoxy would not listen to its wonders, would not look at its strata or its fossils, lest the Bible (that is the common interpretation of it) should be disproved. Unitarianism, always the reconciling medium of natural and revealed religion, felt it alike a duty and a pleasure to listen to the independent instructions of the former, not doubting that whatever the latter really teaches would find illustration and not contradiction in the study of the "world's harmonious volume." Those forced and unmanly schemes of Biblical interpretation by which scientific clergymen are now invited to find space between successive verses of Genesis for the successive ages of geological formation, had not yet been invented; so that the literal orthodox scripturist held his natural position against the geologists (as the priests of the Inquisition once did against Galileo and the astronomers), while the Unitarian held his rightful position also as the vindicator of Scripture, rationally accepted as the record of revelation, and the equally devoted student of the works and will of God in nature. This is our healthful position still, and ours alone; for there is no intelligent geologist who is a really believing Mosaist; nor any real Mosaist who heartily pursues geological science. For the thoroughly believing maintainance and practical illustration of the asserted harmony of natural and revealed religion, the world is, in short, indebted to the Unitarians. All works of repute on the subject by other religionists, either confine themselves to Unitarian views, or are feeble the moment they leave that ground. But my present remarks have reference not so much to written books as to the living facts of society during the half-century on which I am looking back with sharpened Unitarian zeal.

It is less necessary for me to enlarge on the influence which Unitarians have impressed upon society through their strong love of Religious Liberty, their earnest promotion of popular Education, and their devotedness to comprehensive and unsectarian works of Benevolence. But while I feel, as doubtless we all do,

that our truest joy is fulfilled in seeing other men enter into the labours which were too long our own comparatively unaided work, I confess myself a little jealous of some of our newer auxiliaries, and not at all satisfied with their imperfect adoption of our large-hearted plans, to the exclusion in some cases even of our personal co-operation. The Unitarians, in days of real difficulty and danger, fought and won the battles of Religious Liberty, for Protestant Dissent against Church and State exclusiveness, for Roman Catholic citizenship against established and unestablished bigotry, and for themselves against the orthodox appropriation of their hereditary trusts. And now, at the end of these great struggles, they see with amused admiration an organized display of chiefly orthodox force for the "Liberation of Religion from Secular Authority." They have worked for the cause of popular Education without reference to religious sect; and find at last that the most efficient educational zeal to be called forth beyond their own small numbers is that which institutes denominational day-schools. They invented the Domestic Mission, and have to grieve that their noble plan (for which they claimed no exclusive patent right) has been too commonly degraded by miserable proselytism. They were among the first and most earnest promoters of Ragged Schools; yet they have been given to understand in repeated instances, that rags are too orthodox for their interference.

Yet I am convinced that the influence both of Unitarians personally, and of their religious and moral principles, upon society in general, is greater now than ever it was before, and that it is our own fault if it does not still increase. The paltry demonstrations of exclusiveness which sometimes annoy us are, in their way, the ungraciously expressed acknowledgment of this fact, while its positive proofs are patent on all hands. Every where, in public and social life, in Parliament, on the magistrates' bench, in town councils, committees of charity, committees on public business, in literary and scientific societies, mechanics' institutes, schools, &c., they are prominent and active beyond the proportion of their sect to the community. They certainly stand high in general confidence and esteem. They as certainly are not made thus prominent on account of their religious opinions; but those opinions are plainly no disparagement in the eyes of their fellow-men in general; while there seems to be something in their habits of thought or action as a body of religionists which developes the faculties for usefulness and trustworthiness.

But the commonwealth of books exhibit the growing ascendancy of our principles in the most remarkable and incontestable manner of all. The secular, but moral and not irreligious, literature of our country had for generations past been bearing its negative testimony against orthodoxy, and its positive testimony (whenever that was to be naturally offered) in favour of practi-

cally Unitarian views. Our greater poets have scarcely breathed a breath of doctrinal orthodoxy, but have caught their chief inspiration from nature and human life. Our true novelists (not including the writers of "religious novels," profanely so called) have never been supposed from their works to be believers in "saving doctrines of faith." Books of mental and ethical philosophy never alluded to the existence of such beliefs, till Dr. Wardlaw drew attention to the omission, and attempted (sad failure that it proved!) to place the foundation of "Christian Ethics" (where philosopher had never dared to risk placing it before) on the inherent corruption of human nature! All these great facts in the world's literature were a running testimony to the felt truth and practical acceptance of our large views of natural and revealed religion. But the present age has seen our theology actually adopted, with the thinnest disguise, in the books and pulpits of the churches called orthodox. "Broad-school" Churchmen seem to take a delight in disputing the truth of the 39 Articles as generally understood, and giving them a meaning too shadowy to deserve recording as an article of faith at all; while the most advanced men among the Independent denomination have exercised their constitutional freedom in the avowal of opinions contrary to all the previous traditions of the body. It is a proud intellectual triumph of our English Unitarianism, to which Maurice, Robertson, Donaldson, Macnaught, Jowett, Kingsley, White, M'Leod, Campbell, Davidson, have severally ministered by their various avowals of certain theological principles or conclusions which have been considered as our distinguishing heresies till now. I feel proud of such testimonies to the truth, and such proofs of the spread of our Unitarian opinions. Yet I am not quite satisfied with other aspects of the matter.

As regards the men who seem to be in an essentially false position, eating the bread of a doctrinal church whose creeds they have sworn to observe, yet (to all appearance) disputing some of the essentials of those creeds, I have little to say. I try to realize to myself their state of mind, their habits, and the unperceived influence of their position upon their principles of action. I try to imagine how they may be honest still, though appearances are sorely against them. But, to say I approve them; to point to them as among the foremost seekers of theological truth; to their methods in frittering down the natural meaning of Church Articles, as the most likely means of attaining clear and comprehensive religious views; and to their resulting declarations of opinion and expositions of scriptural doctrine, as the actual religious truth that is to be the light and blessing of the present race of earnest seekers after divine knowledge and duty,—is quite beyond my largest liberality as a Unitarian. Rather it is beyond my power of imagination to see in such

modes of religious thought the attributes of free and philosophical inquiry; and it is beyond the bounds of my conscience to say I can morally approve and recommend such a process as the true mode of seeking divine knowledge. I am annoyed to find Unitarians sometimes expressing strong admiration for the theological views of such men, as containing clearer illustrations of divine truth than the world has had before. I look upon them indeed as most interesting and important *in their way;* as illustrating the power of scriptural truth in spite of Church Articles, and the self-assertion of human reason against its self-pretended chains; but I no more expect from men so circumstanced the clear, free, fresh assertion of Christian convictions under large and truly philosophical habits of mind, than I should expect a man with a wooden leg to prove an accomplished dancing-master. And if such a man were to assure me that he had undergone amputation of a natural and undiseased leg, and adopted the wooden one, *for the express purpose of his art,* I should still doubt his wisdom, if I did not his truthfulness. I regard the wooden-legged dancing-master as a fair type of the theologian who affects to consider the Athanasian Creed as the spring of charity in his own heart, and the various formularies of the Church of England as "giving him boldness" of thought and "warning him against the peril and guilt of accepting the opinions of the age as his guides." How free-minded Unitarians, who have really used their religious vantage-ground for the formation of a large and elevated faith of their own, can look upon such "pursuit of theology under difficulties" with any deeper interest than that of a pitying sympathy for men struggling against obstacles which they themselves have happily been spared, I never could imagine. Some of these new Church guides, moreover, it is scarcely possible, by any stretch of charity, to believe sincere, when they renew their subscription to the Articles, or even while they retain preferment. In fine, my great fear now is, not for theological opinion, but for good morals, in connection with religious profession. I see, in the new course which theological liberalism is taking, beyond our own body, a scarcely disguised tendency to the support of acknowledged *shams;* and a *religious sham* I hold to be an immorality at the fountain-head. That it may not injuriously affect the moral principle of those who are within our body, is my most earnest and somewhat anxious hope. It were a new thing for Unitarians to be jealous of liberality of thought; but against laxity of morals they have never failed to set themselves.

Our great safeguards against the infection of this false liberalism will be found, I trust, in our continued faithfulness to those great principles of moral and religious action which have always characterized our body. If I read its history aright, its leading characteristics have always, amid whatever changes of particular

doctrinal opinion, been these:—the free use of Reason in Religion; the study of the Bible with the best aids of human learning; and the elevation of Morality to be part and parcel of Religion. So long as the Unitarian Church is faithful to these great principles, it can, I trust, be in little danger of being swamped (nor will it permit the faith and morals of society to be swamped) by that muddy tide of dissembling orthodoxy and timid liberalism which political churchmen and worldly-minded citizens would hail as the smoothing away of our inconvenient sectarianism. Our prescriptive *Use of Reason in Religion* should forbid all compromise with the mystical or merely sentimental. Semi-orthodox and Broad-church theology delights to walk hand-in-hand with Reason to the confines of sacred Mystery (which are nowhere very far off); and just there, where Reason would be content to bow in solemn reverence, her companion talks low, and guesses boldly, and by and by professes a supernal knowledge of things which she says are indeed quite above human Reason. The latter has something to do to stand her ground when invited thus to know what is beyond knowledge and to believe the incredible. She has to resist the temptation to assume a transcendental sense of things which confessedly transcend her faculty. She must be modest still but resolute, neither daring to deny nor daring to affirm what she knows not, but refusing to profess anything that is inconsistent with what she does know. This is the stern *Reasonableness* which Unitarians, in the spirit as in the phrase of Locke, have ever maintained to belong to Christianity, and which it is treason to the human mind to let go. This Reasonableness of Christianity is threatened by the new liberalism which comes more than half way towards us in doctrine, but brings its fictions and its fetters with it for our acceptance. In vain, so long as we are true to the use of Reason in Religion! *The study of the Bible* with all the aids of scholarship is another great principle of ours. Adopted as a principle and nobly practised by our fathers before they were Unitarians, it made them so, and has made or kept us so too. While other churches have bound themselves by the creeds of Christian antiquity more or less ancient, we have ascended still higher than all of them, to those Scriptures which their creeds profess but to expound, and in expounding disguise and overlay with the thoughts and controversies of progressive church history. Our new liberals of the Church of England are full of the study of ecclesiastical history; and it is a favourite problem with them to find a grain or two of real and permanent philosophy in each wordy church-symbol. Ecclesiastical history is indeed an instructive study, as enabling us to compare the Christianity of Christ and his apostles with the successive accretions of Paganism and Gentile philosophy; but if we become less diligent students of the Scriptures themselves, the other study will put us practically in the posi-

tion of the Romanist, who professes to supply the defects of Scripture by the traditions of his Church. Nor is a sound Biblical theology less necessary, in my opinion, to protect us from the inroads of mystical Philosophy than of mystical Church symbols. The Bible shews us how, in historical fact, the civilized world has gained the most valuable of its existing beliefs; and Biblical study must enable us still to do historical justice to the source of those beliefs, while, in happy possession of them ourselves, we look out upon Nature around, and in upon our conscious faculties, and back upon the history of human philosophy and belief, to estimate the respective testimonies of natural and revealed religion. And most of all do I trust to the high *Morality* which has ever distinguished the religion of the Unitarian Church, to resist the temptations presented by the existing state of theology beyond our body, to a hollow conformity with its seeming liberalism. We may make allowance or apology, in the spirit of charity hoping and believing the best, for those whose false position in the Church painfully contrasts with the self-sacrifice of our Wakefield, Lindsey and other such men since their time; but *to approve*, is stultifying our own principles; and to hope for the theological renovation of the Church in this country at their hands, is little better than blessing Henry VIII. in the name of Protestantism. These men may possibly necessitate the doctrinal reform of the Church by proving, to the scandal of truer Churchmen, that its Articles cannot "hold water;" they may provoke the passionate reaction of sincere low-church bigotry, and throw us upon the chances of a struggle, in and out of Parliament, for Church Reform, amid the conflicting cries for more creeds and fewer, for tighter subscription and looser, for high-church ceremony and low-church Calvinism, for National State-Church open to all and Anti-State-Church shut against all; but if these men become the means of withdrawing the thoughts and exertions of the Unitarians from their distinctive and honourable work, and making them content to watch and wait upon the progress of such timid semi-liberalism,—nothing can happen more grievous to the disciples of Truth, or more satisfactory to those who, through selfish worldliness, hate Reform in Church or State.

Whatever may be the apparent outward prospects of the Unitarian Church in this country, as regards actual additions to its numbers, its influence on the religion and morality of the whole community is most evident and salutary; and to withdraw from this post of solemn trust or quail at it, would be to *unsavour the world's best salt.* It is indeed a service requiring true moral courage to sustain this post; still more, for new volunteers to join us in it. But if there is moral courage to be found any where in the community, it is surely among those who from the days of Puritanism downwards have held great principles regard-

less of popularity, and been content to benefit the world without its knowledge or against its will. It is to be found with those who are accustomed to hear their religious convictions denounced on all hands, but to see them virtually attested in the lives of all the best, and to receive quiet approval for them whenever free thought issues in free speech. I am therefore greatly hurt whenever I hear among my Unitarian friends the tone either of croaking or of resigned despair. What is the use of all the indignant eloquence uttered by some few of ourselves against our existing state, prospects and condition? Why impute to us our difficulties as faults, or our seeming ill-success as ill-doing? What is the use of telling us that we are not the popular sect? That we have not full chapels like Mr. Spurgeon? That we have not class-meetings like the Methodists? That we have not deacons like the Independents? That the temperature of our worship does not rise to fever-heat? That our ministers seldom preach or pray extempore? It needed no croaker to tell us all this. We know very well that we are in contrast, rather than competition, with all the popular sects. We try to do precisely what they cannot. We confess we cannot do what they do. The spirit of some of their plans does not suit us. The want of numbers precludes the imitation by us of some plans that we would fain perhaps adopt. We have our work, as surely as they have theirs;—aye, and a far more distinctive work. Half their sects could be spared; but not ours. What matters it to Religion or to Morals, whether a man worship by the Church creeds, or the Independent or Methodist free prayer? Whether he believe in the Wesleyan Conference, or in the New-Connection Conference, or in the Free Methodist Conference? What are all these questions, and those which divide several other sects, compared with the living and worshiping service of a theology in accordance with Reason, and a Morality inspired directly by Religion? Shall we lament, and whine, and croak, and despair, because other places are fuller than ours? Because the genuine terrors of orthodoxy hold sway over multitudes, and its shadowy form pleases multitudes more, while mere conformity, habit, fashion, acknowledged worldliness, lead other multitudes to more suitable shrines than ours; shall we doubt whether our testimony is true, or right, or a blessing to the world? Let us accept our evident mission like men. Our office is to be unpopular,—yet to be thoroughly respected and approved. It is to be pointed at as dreadful heretics,—yet to be acknowledged as good moralists, and to sway unacknowledged the faith of more orthodox people. It is to be "reviled and loved, denounced and followed," for truer merits than those which the poet described as earning such feelings.

Still less patiently can I hear professing Unitarians speak as if the work of the Unitarian Church in this country was done,

and the golden or Messianic age of a non-sectarian church was already opening; in token of which they may consistently take their places in Mr. Maurice's church, or their parish church in the country, or in that of the most popular (and decidedly liberal) Independent minister of the neighbourhood. It is, I doubt not, the sincere conviction of some highly educated people among us (who mix only with people as cultivated as themselves, who read books of philosophy and general literature, but never open a theological book unless the work of a Unitarian or one of the new liberal orthodox school), that "the day of theological controversy is past;" that its questions are all settled or else superseded; and that all people who are anybody in philosophy and theology are ready for something broader and better than English sectarianism bespeaks. But why do not all those people who are people indeed, join in the broadest and most intelligent worship that now exists? Shall the widest narrow themselves, or the narrower enlarge themselves, to fit the requirements of the theological millennium? While so few dare to be as free as we are, I fear this millennium is yet far off. And the people who are not anybody in the argument, are very numerous in the churches and the world. I cannot ignore the fact that the very zealous and good, but very narrow-minded and yet very influential, evangelical vicar of this very parish warns his people very earnestly against coming to the Unitarian chapel where I till lately ministered, and that his warnings are very faithfully observed by his admirers. I cannot ignore the fact that he the other day called on a Unitarian lady who keeps a day-school near me, to hint to her the danger of her practice in frequenting the chapel, and her especial wickedness in becoming a teacher of children while professing such a faith. I cannot ignore the fact that Mr. P. lately told me he should come to the chapel regularly, but his wife and her friends are sure he would go to the devil if he did, and he does not wish to distress them;—or the other facts innumerable, quite as small and sad as these, that have occurred to my knowledge from the earliest days of my ministry down to the latest (and not less frequently of late), shewing all kind of wretched intimidation and influence to be the habitual instruments of orthodoxy with a view to prevent the avowal of Unitarianism. It is a sweet delusion of refined and philosophical minds that never come in contact with this vulgar herd, to believe in the accomplished end of the Unitarian controversy, and the needlessness of longer secession from orthodox worship. But a more thorough delusion cannot be conceived. Such minds would find work better worth doing in enlightening the darkness that surrounds their bright centres of thought, than in persuading themselves that there is no such work still to be done. I, for one, have no faith in any coming liberalization of the Church of England. What may happen

there, is a mere lottery of chance or of statesmanship. It is a sad palsy upon any Unitarian's working power, meanwhile, to be looking hopefully for a comprehensive, unsectarian Church of England. Does any one rationally believe such a thing can come about during this century? If not, even the young lives now living will have become infirm, if not extinct, before 1900, and no great religious idea will have been realized in that direction. I think they had better *work* meanwhile;—*work* in their own church; and from that church as their centre try to operate upon the careless, heartless, half-orthodox, half-worldly mass of church-goers and chapel-goers beyond; aye, and upon the non-going people too, who would be fewer if there were something more rational for them to go to without being religiously tabood for it. I have no faith in any millennium but such as can be worked out by faithful, conscientious lovers of truth and righteousness. It is not safe to prophesy till after the event. I therefore do not indulge in any definite or distinct hopes respecting the future of Unitarianism. But the duty of the present is to my mind quite plain; plain as is the tendency of the age to general intelligence and liberality of thought; plain as is the exceptional conduct of religious professors in general in the one single department of religion; plain as is the tendency to Unitarian modes of thought in the leading theological writers of other denominations; plain as is the temporizing compromise in the recent writings of many Churchmen; plain as is the prevalence of our views in private and the general suppression of them in public. We have not done our work till we shall have mended the conscience of our fellow-men in respect to religion and orthodoxy. And if we abandon our work, we leave the plague-spot of insincerity and worldliness to spread unchecked through the semi-orthodox churches and the careless, wealth-seeking and fashion-loving world. Unitarianism has long been the central force of Free Thought in Religion. I believe it is now destined to prove the germ of high-minded sincerity and pure morality where they are, alas! most seriously endangered,—namely, within the precincts of the church of Christ itself. A blessing be with those who in such "simplicity and godly sincerity have their conversation in the world," as Unitarians, and especially as Unitarian ministers! It is a noble work. It needs, and it will reward, true men. I could wish myself young enough to begin again in these new and not less interesting, not less difficult, aspects of the work. I desire to "serve" in some degree, while yet I may "stand and wait."

LETTER TO MARY, SHORTLY AFTER HER BEREAVEMENT.

*M———, Feb.* 18, 1858.

My dear Mary,—I hope that my good old friend, your father, and yourself and your sisters and brothers, are, slowly it must be, but gradually, becoming resigned to the late overwhelming dispensation of your Almighty Ruler and Benefactor. Overwhelming as it was, and yet is, I no more doubt, than I doubt God's existence, that it had its origin, not only in infinite wisdom, but also in infinite love. Neither do I doubt that such a conviction will ultimately be attained by all who felt the blow; and that, in time, you will all be able to bow before it, not only with submission, but with acquiescence.

"Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him," was the sublime faith of Job,—a declaration I can never read without a thrill through my whole frame. A *Christian*, therefore, with his greater light, should be able to say, and better far to feel, that "even if God consumes all my property, even if He visits me with long, long disease, even if he disappoints my most cherished hopes, even if he takes from earth the one whom of all its inhabitants I loved the best, I am determined to believe that He is still a Father." Such a faith is not only possible, it has been attained eventually by thousands and tens of thousands of the followers of Christ, and forms an essential, ineradicable part of our beloved Unitarianism.

In one of your late letters to Mrs. M., you expressed a wish for greater certainty on the question of the Recognition of Friends in the next life. It seems to me that there cannot be room for the shadow of a doubt on the subject. The proof from nature for a future state is often derived from the universal *desire* in the hearts of all mankind to live again; "for," it is said, "God, who is both infinitely wise and infinitely good, would not constitute our hearts so, that they *must* necessarily entertain any innocent desire, if He had not resolved to gratify it." The same may be said of the wish to meet, to know, to converse with, and to love, in the "better land," those we have lost in this. It is a virtuous desire; it is a universal desire, for all entertain it who wish to live again; it is a necessary desire, for our hearts are so moulded that they cannot help cherishing it; in plain language, God himself *put* the desire into our hearts; *could* He put it there without intending to gratify it? This mode of viewing the matter is exceedingly conclusive to my mind; and I hope, my dear Mary, will prove equally so to yours.

The New Testament says nothing directly upon the question before us, but it *implies* mutual recognition in a large number of passages. Let us limit ourselves to one, from the lips of our Divine Master himself. It occurs in that most exquisite and most consolatory xivth chapter of John's Gospel, which I would

recommend all of you to read repeatedly. At the 3rd verse, Jesus says to the twelve, in their sorrow at the prospect of losing him so soon,—"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; *that where I am, ye may be also.*" The words I have underlined clearly imply the doctrine of which we are in quest. The apostles were one day to be "with Jesus" in heaven; that is, they were to *know* him there, to be in his society, to hold intercourse with him, to renew the love and veneration they bore to him on earth. They were to be and to do all this in a body; and, of course, if they should then know Jesus, they would then know one another, and that mutual knowledge would contribute very much, not only to their happiness, but also to their spiritual progress.

Now, if there was to be mutual recognition for the apostles in the higher life, why should there not be for all other Christians, especially as in their case also it would contribute so incalculably to their advancement in bliss and in goodness?

Adding merely the further thought, that, to the tender and the loving, Heaven itself would scarce be Heaven, unless its beatitudes were to be shared by those with whom their affections were most strongly entwined while here, I unwillingly tear myself from a theme so fascinating, with the hope that I have done something, be it ever so little, to strengthen your faith in a doctrine so lofty and so consoling.

Although written to *you*, yet everything I have said may be considered, and I wish it to be considered, as addressed equally to your father and all your brothers and sisters.

Mrs. M. sends love, and thanks for your and Eliza's letters.

With kindest regards to every individual in your circle, I am, my dear Mary, yours affectionately,

R. E. B. M.

---

## COLERIDGE AND THE PERSONALITY OF THE DEVIL.

Coleridge calls the personal existence of the Evil Principle, "a mere fiction, or, at best, an allegory supported by a few popular phrases and figures of speech, used incidentally or dramatically by the evangelists." And he says that "the existence of a personal, intelligent Evil Being, the counterpart and antagonist of God, is in direct contradiction to the most express declarations of Holy Writ. *Shall there be evil in a city and the Lord hath not done it?* (Amos iii. 6). *I make peace and create evil* (Isaiah xlv. 7). This is the deep mystery of the abyss of God." Do our theologians go with him here? I think not: yet, as a theologian, Coleridge is constantly appealed to by Churchmen.—*Mrs. Jameson's Commonplace-Book.*

MEMOIR OF THE LATE REV. GEORGE ARMSTRONG, OF BRISTOL.*

On the 10th of October, he left Dublin for Bristol; and on the 12th, his journal contains an account of his safe arrival at No. 11, Park Place, Clifton, where comfortable rooms had been prepared for him. On the 14th, he gives an interesting account of his feelings on surveying the beauties of Clifton Downs.

"After looking over my sermon, &c. for to-morrow, walked out at half-past twelve with a letter from Dublin for Miss Hall at Sneyd Park, crossing the Downs and Durdham Common, beyond which the approach through the fields was perfectly delicious. Found Miss H. at home, who obligingly accompanied me through the charming grounds of the adjoining demesne, and re-conducted me to the Downs through the wood overlooking the Avon, taking me on the way to a lovely meadow, from which the prospect of the Severn and the Welsh mountains and hills of Monmouth in the distance, together with sloping fields, woods, villas, flocks and herds, all enchantingly blended in the foreground, formed a picture of such surpassing and unimaginable beauty, that I could hardly believe I stood on earth! Indeed, had my orthodoxy been more rigid than it was, the history of the *fall of man* must have appeared a fiction, since I was ready to swear that if ever a Paradise had being, it was still accessible to the sons of Adam, and that I was then and there enjoying it."

And never did these beauties lose their charm for him. During the twenty years he passed in their neighbourhood, his favourite walk was over the downs and fields he here describes; and towards the end of his life, when he had succeeded, to his infinite delight, in building a house of his own within an easy distance of this "paradise," it was often the privilege of the writer to accompany him to a convenient spot to view the enchanting landscape and listen to the poetical and pious ejaculations which this scenery and its associations never failed to call from his lips. Sweet indeed is the memory of those happy hours passed in the society of this noble, generous-hearted man.

Sunday, October 15, Mr. A. writes: "Preached and went through the whole morning service to a very large congregation at Lewin's Mead.

"Tuesday, 17th. Mr. Estlin called and sat with me for half an hour. One of the most agreeable, gentlemanlike persons I have ever seen.

"Sunday, 22nd. Preached and went through the whole service. Morning service, the place cram-full. In the evening preached a second time."

Of the effect of his preaching on the congregation, he gives the following amusing specimen:

---

* Continued from p. 290.

"Monday 23rd. On leaving the Bush tavern, after making inquiries about the London coaches, I proceeded to the singularly ancient street called 'Mary-le-Port,' after inspecting which I was about to pass on, when lo! a person without his coat on, in a hurried but pressing manner requested me to follow him to his house hard by. I did so; but it was more pursuit than following, so rapid was his pace. In a very few moments he turned into a shoemaker's shop—never stopped a moment—shot up a narrow flight of stairs, I at his heels—when, after imploring me to be seated, he darted to a cupboard, took the remains of what *was* a bottle of wine, called to his wife to bring a glass and some biscuits, and fell to talking with me about Lewin's Mead, glorifying me for my sermons and services, telling me he was Mr. W——, an humble shoemaker, and one of some twenty others who were that very day engaged in subscribing to join in giving me a tea-party, in the hope that I would please to meet and converse with them. As I was engaged for the whole week, I begged him to postpone the invitation. He was very reluctant to do so, but at last consented. So after talking about the congregation and its schools and tract societies, and thanking Providence for the excellent and dutiful children he had, to whom and their mother he introduced me before I departed, at length I was able to effect my egress into the street.*

"In the evening I was engaged in the thoughts of the morning's doings, and of the (to me) odd sort of life which was beginning to open on me, when Mr. William Palmer was announced. His object was to request my return from London here, to be present at their sacramental service on Sunday, Nov. 5. I requested leave to take a day or two to think of it, foreseeing the probable event of my preaching in case of consenting. On the whole, I now saw clearly the growing crisis in which I was so soon to be involved, and I felt strongly the rather *frightful* amount of the *success* by which my mission to Bristol had been, and was still likely to be attended!

"May God Almighty in his great mercy protect, guide, sanctify and prepare me for whatever result and whatever duties, public or private, He may see fit to appoint for me! Amen."

Mr. Armstrong returned to Bristol from London, and remained there until the 10th of November, when he took his departure for Liverpool, where he was the guest of the Rev. James Martineau. While there, he paid a visit to his friend Mr. Blanco White, of which he thus speaks in his journal:

"Saturday, Nov. 11. Accompanied by Mr. James Martineau, I called on Mr. Blanco White, with whom we conversed with much pleasure for three quarters of an hour. At first, Mr. White

* These children have since then emigrated to Australia, where they are doing well, and now support their parents in comfortable retirement. They are active members of the Unitarian church at Melbourne.

seemed and declared himself extremely ill and incapable of the effort of conversation; but he insensibly rallied, and soon evinced an uncommon earnestness and power. His curious and forcible remarks on the character and position of Archbishop Whately. The utopian work of the latter. Animated description of his impressions on reading a recent work of his German friend Neander on the Inspiration of Scripture.

"Sunday, 12th. Preached in Mr. Martineau's church. In the evening heard Mr. Thom preach at Renshaw-Street chapel,—a delightful place of worship, well supported by the distinguished talent of the minister.

"Tuesday, 14th. Took a berth in the steamer for Dublin. On the whole, I passed my short sojourn in Liverpool most agreeably in the house of Mr. and Mrs. Martineau. The latter well worthy to be the wife of one of the purest and most cultivated individuals to be met with;—a distinguished scholar, an acute philosopher in every department of human science, and if not the soundest of divines, that far better thing,—one of the most upright, high-minded and amiable of human beings.

"Wednesday, 15th. On my arrival at Dublin found the distinguished gratification awaiting me of a copy of his tract on Texas from Dr. Channing.

"Thursday, 23rd. This and the following days of the week occupied in communicating with Mr. Grote on the unparalleled outrage of Lord John Russell in the House of Commons on the subject of the Ballot, &c. Sent Mr. G. my letter to Lord M——e.

"Wednesday, 29th. Found on my arrival home the long-expected and all too flattering and decisive letter from Bristol! O how my stunned heart fled to God for relief and solace!"

The letter here alluded to was one from Mr. H. A. Palmer, the Treasurer of Lewin's-Mead chapel, enclosing the following resolution, passed unanimously at a general congregational meeting:

"That the Rev. George Armstrong be invited to undertake the office of co-pastor of this religious society, in conjunction with our revered minister, the Rev. Dr. Carpenter."

To this invitation Mr. Armstrong returned a favourable reply, couched in his usual modest, self-depreciatory manner.

"After much thought and many prayers to Almighty God for guidance to a wise and worthy conclusion," he writes to Mr. Palmer, "it is my duty to inform you that I accept the important trust which the Lewin's-Mead society have been pleased to offer me." "I have only to add," he continues, after some complimentary allusions to his future amiable and worthy colleague, "that my whole time and strength shall be at the service of your people; but aware as I believe you sufficiently are of my lengthened retirement from professional duty, and especially that of the pulpit, I am disposed to hope that if I should seem to devote myself with less of assiduity and alacrity to extra pulpit

duties than the congregation, or I myself under different circumstances, would desire,—this fact will be attributed to its true cause—the absolute necessity of a somewhat undue application of my time to preparation for the constantly recurring exertions of the Sunday, for which I am at present, and must be for a no inconsiderable period of time, so slenderly provided with resources."

He proceeded to communicate his acceptance of this new sphere of duty to his friends and relatives, and to many of them he shewed the flattering letter from Bristol. Although the latter, who were still attached by long custom and affection to the Established Church, naturally felt pleased at the high estimation of his talents and his worth by the Lewin's-Mead congregation, they could not entirely suppress their regrets that they were Dissenters. "The Bristol letter is very complimentary," writes one of his nieces. "Papa was greatly pleased with it. I only wish it was from a committee of Mr. Biddulph's chapel, instead of Dr. Carpenter's."

The time was now fast approaching when he was to bid adieu to old scenes and old associations, to take up his abode among strangers and almost to begin the world anew. His journal describes him as "constantly in the agony of packing;" and on Sunday, the 28th of January, 1838, he writes: "A melancholy sabbath to me!—a leave-taking of things animate and inanimate which I would fain have never parted from." Two days more, and he is away to his new home.

"Tuesday, January 30. At five o'clock parted with kind and hospitable Bess and her party, and at half-past five committed myself to the vessel which was to bear me from my dear native land, on I know not what mission of weal or woe. Just as we loosed out the hawser which had held us to the shore, I put up some prayers which I trust were accepted, and shed some tears which I felt to be uncontrollable, at the deep and moving thoughts, as well of the chequered past as of the unknown and anxious future, which were struggling for the mastery in my bosom in that trying moment.

"Beautiful as the day had been, the evening became cold and cloudy soon after we set sail, with a wind a-head of us. Yet our passage was as smooth as across a lake. I remained on deck, in conversation with the captain and some ladies, as long as I could endure the cold, and until I had quite lost sight of, alas! the long known and familiar lights of Howth and Dublin Bay.

"Thursday, Feb. 1. Arrived at half-past eight at my apartments at 13, Meridian Place, Clifton. Full of depressing thoughts, and nothing on earth to raise and comfort me, save the never-failing resource of prayer to God.

"Greatly do I err (and would that it were an error!) if the situation I have been urged to accept do not prove much beyond

my power to fill with the comfort and honour which so many of my friends and prudent advisers have so long and so strenuously been predicting as the result of my painful and eventful experiment.

"Sunday, Feb. 4. Commenced this day, in devout self-surrender to my Heavenly Father, my accepted and formal ministration as co-pastor with the Rev. Dr. Lant Carpenter in the charge of Lewin's-Mead congregation of Bristol. A very numerous congregation, and abundantly kind expressions of welcome, &c. after the service."

Success continued, in spite of his misgivings, to attend his efforts in the pulpit, and he was induced at the request of his congregation to publish the three remarkable discourses with which he commenced his labours among them.* And well did these and all his other sermons deserve this success; for they were composed with infinite care, and were the genuine outpourings of a truly religious heart, and a well-pondered, deeply-felt faith in God and Christ.

But what a change of social position, social relations and public responsibilities, for the incumbent of Bangor and the squire of Bingfield! Some interesting passages of his journal, where he has laid bare his heart, will enable us to follow him in all the secret movements of his thoughts and feelings in the situation, so novel and so trying to his gentle nature, of a Dissenting minister and professional advocate of an unpopular and misrepresented faith.

One circumstance among many others which made him feel how completely he had severed himself from the past, and "how friends were changed," was the conduct of a lady and her nephew who had been among the most intimate acquaintances of his family when residing in Ireland.

The appointment to a curacy at Clifton had brought the nephew from Ireland, who with his aunt was residing at the former place at the time of Mr. Armstrong's arrival there to enter upon his duties at Lewin's-Mead chapel. He had been welcomed kindly by them when he came to Bristol on his former passing visits; but now that he was finally settled there, the lady informed him, through a mutual friend, that their intimacy must be considered at an end. The demon "orthodoxy" is ever greedy of sacrifices, and on its polluted altar the curate and his aunt made an offering of their friend. But of the spirit which influenced the orthodox and that which guided the soul of the heretic, and which was nearest the spirit of the gospel, I leave the readers of the following letters to judge.

* Abuse of Power in the State, the Cause and Support of Corrupt Doctrine in the Church. Three Discourses; together with an Address explanatory of the Author's Secession from the United Church of England and Ireland. London: Simpkin and Marshall. 1838.

"Clifton, Feb. 3, 1838.

"My dear Madam,—Although the letter which you will receive with this was written before my departure from Ireland, I have kept it by me until my arrival here, that I might have time to reflect whether there were anything in it of which I could conscientiously disapprove, or which could reasonably be thought unpleasing to you.

"I could not indeed bear the thought of wounding a mind so gentle and once so friendly as yours; and from my heart I do believe, as I can truly say I did intend, that nothing of the kind either is or should be conveyed in the letter I now forward.

"May I say to you further and finally, that in my unsuspecting nature, and with feelings perhaps more than usually susceptible, I was ill prepared for a repulse from the only individual in this place, so strange to me, whose recollection of times and *persons* so cherished in my mourning heart could (as I had hoped) have helped to soothe and mitigate emotions which only those who have mourned can understand, and only those who *feel* could adequately relieve.

"I am, dear Madam, under every circumstance, very respectfully yours,

GEORGE ARMSTRONG."

"Dublin, Jan. 1838.

"Dear Madam,—Soon after my return from England, I had an opportunity of hearing of the embarrassment you felt at the prospect of my connection with Bristol; and now, on my visiting Mrs. Owen Armstrong, learn by a more recent communication from you how necessary it is I should no longer postpone the duty of setting your mind at ease on my account. I wish you to be assured, dear Madam, that on my return to Bristol, whither I am immediately repairing, it will be as little my wish as it can be yours, or that of your nephew, to enter upon an intercourse which, in the state of mind I should find in your circle, must prove to the full as distasteful to me as it could be annoying to you. Yet, setting aside any circumstances that might affect myself in the case, I cannot but feel deeply concerned that so injurious and (pardon me for terming it) mistaken a conception of duty should have found expression from your pen. I happen to have now before me two communications, at very distant intervals of time, from you and your family to me and mine. The one dated at S——, in 1817, jointly from Mr. W——, yourself and your nephew (then a child); the other dated but recently from Clifton, to my cousin Mrs. Armstrong.

"On perusing this correspondence, I have been tempted to exclaim to myself—'Look on this picture,—and on this!' And in dwelling on the melancholy exhibition presented in the latter, have been further tempted to exclaim, in words which your

nephew will understand—'Tantum *religio* potuit suadere malorum!' The former all kindness,—the latter, alas! how deeply infected with the spirit which has in all times prompted the persecutor to imagine that, in dealing whether death, or defamation, or unkindness (in *principle* it matters not which), he was rendering a service to God!

"But neither in the quoted passage, nor in the example which you would unhappily seem to sanction, is it 'Religion,' in its better and genuine sense, which has anything to do in the matter.

"Oh no! Assuredly it is *not* religion—the religion at least of Christ—as represented in Matt. xxv. 35, &c., which prompts you to drive a stranger from your door; but *that* which perhaps some few of your clerical friends may have read of in Chillingworth (occasionally a very revered authority among Churchmen when they wish to be considered as genuine Protestants)—'*the deifying of our own interpretations*' of Scripture,—which he justly calls 'the common incendiary of Christendom,'—and the setting up that as an idol in our breast which is taken to be an image of the true God, while it is all the while but an impress of our own poor fallible judgment, and in fact but another form of SELF. For what indeed else, my dear Madam, but *your own interpretations* (abstracting them, as I am willing to do, from all considerations of mere worldly policy)—what, I ask, but your own interpretations can they be which appear to you to warrant the line of conduct you propose to pursue on the present occasion? For my own part, I protest I can conceive of no other than three possible ways in which any religious opinion can be got at.

"Either one's own private judgment, or the Church's authority, or divine inspiration. Now if a person have the last, it behoves him to shew forth visibly the miraculous power with which he is invested, as the apostles did of old; for assuredly it is not enough to *tell* another that he possesses that power, and is supernaturally guarded from falling into error.

"But if he rely on the Church's authority, then wherefore plead the evidence of Scripture, which in itself must be all-sufficient; and is that which the same mighty Chillingworth has ever vindicated in the memorable words, 'The Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants'? Wherefore, in short, renounce the dominion of Rome, which rests on authority, and what she calls uniformity of tradition; but to which authority and tradition it could easily be shewn, whether of the Churches of Rome or England, that they have neither of them the slightest shadow of pretension, inasmuch as their respective opinions, and even some in which they coalesce, have been in all ages of the Church exposed to open rejection and dispute. But, lastly, if only one's own private judgment is to be relied on, may it not just be *possible* that that judgment is *mistaken*—and that interpretations

of Holy Scripture which you, for example, hold to be most warranted, have less of truth in them than your own education and circumstances have hitherto permitted you to suspect, seeing that the most worthy, intelligent and competent, nay illustrious, individuals, who have sought God and truth with all their soul and all their strength, and have devoutly surrendered their whole lives to the service of their Saviour,—the Miltons, the Newtons, and the Lockes,—have altogether failed to perceive those doctrines in Scripture, of which you declare (wrongfully, as I in common with them believe) the evidence to be so palpable and convincing?

"But enough. However large and urgent the theme with which you have supplied me, I forbear; and would only add that the head and front of mine offending is that, in all humility but in all sincerity, I would maintain that there is 'but one God, the *Father;* and one Lord, Jesus Christ;' that 'there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, *one God and Father* of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all;' and that 'This is life eternal, to know' (which is to believe and obey) 'the *Father* as the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent.'

"Finally, 'If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's.'

"Wishing you, dear Madam, all happiness and comfort in your own belief, and a spirit of forbearance and humility towards that of others, perhaps as competent, and certainly as sincere, as yourself, who may happen to differ from you in what they esteem to be the word and will of God,—I remain, with every feeling of respect, your very obedient servant,

GEORGE ARMSTRONG."

"Sunday, March 25. Preached in Lewin's Mead in the morning on Faith and Reason. Came home to luncheon, and looked over sermon for evening service at Bath, whither, at half-past two, George, Jane and I set out in a fly. Arrived at half-past four. Walked about the town and afterwards to Unitarian chapel, Trim Street, where, lo and behold! we found *my name* announced for the evening service in *printed placards* on the doors! Well, well, well, to be sure—the Rev. George, of Bingfield and Donnybrook and Kilsharvan and Clontarf—will my soul be ever reconciled to the change? As yet, no sign of it.

"March 27. This morning waited upon by the Secretary of the Lewin's-Mead Easter anniversary, to request me to *undertake the arrangement of the resolutions.* How on earth shall I do this! The meeting is to take place on Good Friday, on which morning I have to preach, and then again to get up a speech or set of speeches for the evening. Truly, all this *is* passing strange to me.

"April 23. Went out with Jane on the interesting duty of visiting some sick poor; and truly pleasing and instructive as well as interesting this duty was.

"April 30. To Bath. Walked with Mr. Howse to Prior Park, passing by Widcombe House, once the residence of my uncle Forbes, and recognizing in all its pristine beauty of form, if not as yet of foliage, the venerable chesnut-tree which I used to admire in my earlier rambles round this lovely neighbourhood when visiting Mr. and Mrs. F. in former years in Bath. What strange and inexplicable, and, alas! what harrowing changes too, since my latest visit there before, in Feb. 1819! How I wished to be alone, that I might think and think and think of dear and distant times, without the sound of any voice or foot-step but my own!

"May 15. Went to meeting at Guildhall, Bristol, convened to petition for immediate abolition of apprenticeship in the West Indies. A most able and eloquent statement of the whole case from a Rev. Mr. Bunting, of Liverpool. Observed with regret and surprise that no interest was taken in this meeting by the people of Lewin's Mead.

"May 19. Sat this day and night twelve hours and a half writing out my sermon, of very formidable length—forty-six pages in all—thirty-eight of which I this day wrote. To bed at three o'clock in the morning.

"May 20. Preached my long sermon for Stokes Croft school. Morning being bad, attendance was thin; but discouraging as this circumstance was, I went through it with wonderful force and animation, although I had only two hours of disturbed sleep the night, or rather morning, before.

"May 25. All day at sermon. Some sweet sauntering after breakfast and before dinner in the fields. It is *indeed* beyond expression sweet—the only blessed portion of my being—to sit by an old tree on a sunny though sheltered and quite secluded bank, with a little pocket prayer-book in my hand, communing with God, while I think in resignation of the past, in humble hope of the future, and only in doubt as to the reality of the actual present. Verily, always has my life been a strange one; but now ten thousand-fold more strange than ever.

"May 30. Visited as usual my oratory at the foot of a tree with my little manual of prayer. What indeed were man without God in the world! And is it not something—nay, is it not everything—to have found this out?

"Aug. 24. Met Rev. Henry W——,* face to face, twice this day. Poor creature! he thought he was doing God service in passing by on the other side, as if he knew me not! Of such is orthodoxy!

---

* The gentleman referred to in the letters at pp. 343—345.

And so amid the anxious, and to Mr. Armstrong the absorbing, duties of the pulpit and its attendant obligations, he passed the first eight months of this, as it were, second part of his life. In October he visited his old friends in Ireland, and his thoughts and reflections amid associations so suggestive of the past, the present and the future, throw a pleasant light on the inner life and character of this man whom I am anxious to make known,—to those who had the privilege to own him as a pastor, that the lessons he taught them may be deepened in their hearts; and to those who knew him only partially, and to those who knew him not at all, that they may profit by the example of a life devoted to conscience and to duty, hallowed by the sweetest affections, and comforted and supported by trust in God.

"October 23, 1838. Outside the coach to Kilsharvan. I sat vis-à-vis to good-natured W. W——, brother to the orthodox hero of Clifton; but, much to the advantage of his good heart, poor fellow! but little infected with the insolent delusions of his Rev. relative in England. In fact, we chatted very pleasantly until we parted at Gormanstown turnpike-gate.

"Oct. 24. A walk about noon in the garden. The stillness most affecting to me. With melancholy pleasure sauntered through my old walks in the wood and furbawn. Much Bristol chat in the evening by the library fire.

"Oct. 29. About eleven o'clock, proceeded to walk to Tully, and met Dr. R—— on my way. Interesting, alas! too interesting, conversation about past times and events. Mentioned that the Bishop would be glad to see me. Parted, as we had met, with kindness and affection. Pursued my walk. At Farnham Gate turned into the park for cleanness' sake, or rather indeed for 'auld lang syne.' . . . . .

"How many changes to the occupants of that place, as well as to myself, since I had, with happy heart and my gallant steed, last entered that gate to gallop amidst the frightened deer between the two gates on my way to my sweet home at Bingfield! While I was walking this day through the same scene, the sun shone and the air was pleasant, as if to intimate that there was Goodness still above and around me; and that it would be my own fault if there were not within me, too, a portion of that sunshine and sweetness in which nature and the fair scene before me were at that moment arrayed.

"Pursuing my way, at length reached the old back road to Kilmore; and in due time came in view, for the first time since it was finished, of the beautiful new palace of my old friend the Bishop, for whom, in common with every person and object of my old neighbourhood, I felt, and could not help feeling, an overpowering interest. Soon arriving at Tully Gate, revealed myself to the much-delighted view of Mary, wife of my former very excellent ploughman and faithful servant, John M'Gayshan.

The gladness and affection of the poor woman on recognizing me, quite overcame me. Found the Major's family all well—very glad to see me—and all, except the youngest boy, quite grown up.

"Accompanied by the Major, I walked up to Danesport to see the odd Dean. Alack and alas! the good, fat, jolly, hospitable Dean of former days! when Dick M——, Henry L——, Archdeacon A——, the Bishop and his lady, perhaps Edward G—— or Alex. M—— of the *party*, the sweet family party from Bingfield, would all meet together and laugh and chat and dine and *sup* too, till the long hour of twelve gave warning that it was more than time to go home.

"Visit ended at the Dean's, thence to Kilmore to call on the Bishop. Met Mrs. Beresford at the hall-door, who, after introducing me to Mark's very interesting children, went up to tell the Bishop I was there; but he sent word he was much too unwell to see me in his room, but hoped he would see me again; a hope, however, not likely now ever to be realized.

"Time too limited to think of going to Bingfield, or poor deserted Crossdoney, even if my feelings could have reconciled me to the attempt. After a kind and hospitable entertainment by the Major, who brought out a bottle of my own old Madeira, took my departure at nine o'clock in his carriage to meet the mail in Cavan, by which, after a rapid and prosperous journey on a very fine night, I arrived in Dublin at six o'clock on the following morning.

"Nov. 2. To Sandy Cove, Kingston, to see my dear, kind Mrs. W——. Went so far in company with O—— L——. Our curious and animated conversation about treatment of servants by masters in reference to attendance at family prayers; also on Irish politics generally. Curiously enough, it was in fact my friend who had preposterously declined to hire as coachman John M'K., for whom I felt so much interest, a most exemplary and respectable servant, because the wife of the latter—whom also he would have hired as housekeeper—had an insuperable objection to attending the prayers of a Protestant family. Bigotry and gross darkness on both sides! But do country gentlemen in Ireland, mere *political* Protestants as most of them are, hope to mitigate the bigotry of the more *ignorant*, and therefore more *excusable*, Catholics by such nonsensical and wicked pretensions as this?

"Nov. 4. Preached at Strand Street. Complimentary and curious comments from sundry and various folks. Met Miss W—— at Gardiner's Row, who had come to beg I would let her take my sermon to Mrs. W—— to read it, my cousin and nephew W. L—— having also just the moment before asked permission to copy it. Well, the lady first, of course: accordingly the sermon was taken to Kingstown, and was actually copied that night by good Mrs. W——, who sent it back to me

next morning by ten o'clock, ready to be forwarded, agreeably to promise, to friend W. L——. Whereupon to W. L—— it was sent, who giving it to a scrivener to copy, came the following morning to tell me how *proud* I ought to be, for it had cost him no less than ten shillings to have it transcribed! And thus it is that capricious Fortune showers honours in the path even of the least expectant and the least worthy."

And thus once more among old friends and old scenes, his heart warmed by tender recollections of so many days passed and so many pleasures enjoyed among them,—his mind too somewhat harassed by misgivings as to his qualifications for his new post at Bristol,—perhaps a little dismayed at the isolated situation of a Unitarian minister, of the public advocate "of a sect every where spoken against,"—and at the little honour in which it was held by the world, and the limited circle of social intercourse and social influence to which he would be henceforth confined,—his thoughts seem to have turned again to the "Secretaryship of the National Education Board."

"Monday, Nov. 5," he writes—"Walking about a good deal with my excellent friend H——;* taking counsel of him as to the Secretaryship of Education Board. His strong advice to me to remain *contented;* with the observation, that in my situation, and as he was pleased to say, with *my powers (?) he* would not relinquish it for an Archbishop's throne! Yet he said I might at least inquire of our veritable Archbishop (Dick of Dublin, as he is called) how far the exercise of religious liberty, or at least of the clerical function, would be compromised or affected in the contingency of such an appointment. And this I determined to do.

"Nov. 6. Supped with Dr. Armstrong. His strong remark to me on my preaching. Lord have mercy upon me, and enable me to keep my heart!

"Nov. 7. Called on the Archbishop, this being his clerical day. Thought it so queer to find myself among so many wights of a 'doxy' so opposite to my own, and yet so entirely unsuspected by the reverend crowd of hangers-on and expectants, among whom I was sitting, or standing, or chatting, as chance or convenience led, with the most perfect unconcern; except, indeed, on thinking of the dense and dismal mass of prejudice and bigotry, and theological folly or fierceness, with which I was then surrounded! How long, O Lord! how long? In my turn conversed with his Grace, to whom I very frankly communicated my views as to the situation of Secretary to the National Education Board, and the conditions under which (supposing success attainable) I could alone permit myself to accept it. Just as frankly, and with great good-humour and courtesy, did

* A clergyman of the Established Church.

his Grace communicate in reply, that my being a clergyman, no matter of what denomination, was in itself a bar to my views which to the Board would be insuperable—it being imperative, in discharge of their trust, to abstain from every appearance of favouring any one religious body more than another, or giving any reasonable grounds of jealousy by one appointment, without *balancing* it with another, which, even were it practicable or expedient, would be endless. I quite anticipated, in truth, this view of the case; but conceiving it a duty, as well to my friends as to myself, to put the matter beyond doubt, I did not regret having taken this step, and with no feeling of dissatisfaction at the result, and with all due expression of thanks for his Grace's obliging reception, wished he might live a thousand years, and bid him a very good morning. The fact is, I felt relieved—the matter had long weighed on my mind; and my children and relations would doubtless have rejoiced in my appointment to so distinguished a situation. But I was already in a situation, which, if not so advantageous or largely remunerating, was yet one of honour and usefulness; and I humbly blessed God that I was so far favoured as to be called to his service in a way more directly congenial to my tastes and compatible with my powers, and not less conducive to the benefit of his creatures."

His visit to Ireland was now at an end, and, casting "a longing, lingering look behind," he set sail for Liverpool on the 8th of November, 1838, and after a short sojourn at Birmingham, where he preached, he reached Bristol on Monday, the 12th. He thus touchingly alludes to his forsaken home—forsaken truly, but in search of nobler fields of duty:

"Nov. 12. My dear Janey at kind Mrs. Acland's, with whom and the friendly family at Stapleton Grove she had been staying during most of my absence in Ireland. I cannot yet bring myself to say from '*home*.' For still and ever, I believe, that fond and happy name will be associated in my mind with the land of my fathers—the scene of my birth, my boyhood, and of a manhood for the most part happy, though dashed with trials, and never to be forgotten for the society and the love which, alas! can never now be mine again. O yes! my home is where my heart is."

But his heart was not destined to be left so desolate. Trials, bitter trials, indeed, were in store for him; but joys also awaited him; and Bristol became the scene not only of honoured usefulness, but of domestic happiness and peace. There he formed new ties as a husband and a father, and his sick pillow,—for he suffered much from asthma,—was soothed, and his life again cheered, by the affection of amiable children and the indefatigable devotion of an admirable wife. He re-entered vigorously on his duties as one of the ministers of Lewin's-Mead chapel,

and soon became known, not only as an able Christian advocate, but also as one of the most public-spirited, patriotic and liberal of the citizens of Bristol. In the exercise of these duties, and in some of the communings of his own soul, it will now be my privilege briefly to speak of him, until, overcome by illness, he resigns his pulpit (without, however, resigning his pen or relinquishing his efforts for the world's progress and the world's peace), and at length, reclining on his wife's shoulder, and full of faith and hope, drops asleep, only to awake in heaven.

(To be continued.)

---

## CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO THE THEOLOGY OF MANCHESTER NEW COLLEGE.

*To the Rev. John James Tayler, B.A., Principal of Manchester New College, London.*

Maidstone, May 6th, 1858.

Dear Sir,—Not long since I had occasion to meet four other Dissenting ministers of this town, on matters connected with the opening of our new cemetery.

Business having been transacted, one of them, during the subsequent general conversation, made the following statement, which he said he had on good authority:

"That there were some students at the Unitarian College who doubted, or denied, the miracles and resurrection of Christ; that they applied to one of the Professors to know if the entertainment of such doubts, or denials, were any barrier to their entrance on the Christian ministry; and that the Professor answered *in the negative*."

I did not, at the time, feel myself in a position either to admit or to contradict this statement; and now apply to you to know whether there be any foundation for it, and what are the real facts of the case.

I am, dear Sir, yours truly,
R. E. B. Maclellan.

*To the Rev. R. E. B. Maclellan, Maidstone.*

22, Woburn Square, London, May 8th, 1858.

Dear Sir,—I think I can give a satisfactory answer to your inquiries. Some time ago some of the older theological students expressed a wish to discuss with me the subject of the Resurrection of Christ. I observed to them at the time, that such a discussion might probably lead to misapprehension and censure from without, but that, if they would enter on the subject seriously and reverentially, I did not feel myself at liberty, considering the relation in which I stood to them, to decline their request. I found that some of them had difficulty in realizing

to themselves the ascension of Jesus Christ in a material body of flesh and blood into a state of spiritual glory and dominion, such as he is described as occupying in the Acts and the Epistles. In summing up the result of the various remarks that had been made in the course of the discussion, I remember saying, that whatever difficulties might attach to some of the recorded appearances of Christ in the interval between his resurrection and ascension—(difficulties which have been felt and have given rise to various theories among the most earnest Christians from Origen downwards to Mr. F. D. Maurice)—and that whatever obscurity might surround the fact of his direct passage from the body to a spiritual state, the *conclusive* point to be dwelt upon, in opposition to these minor difficulties, as involving the *reality* of an ascension and of Christ's continual presence with his disciples in a risen and glorified state, was the fact of the entire change of mind, attested by Tacitus himself, which came over the disciples soon after the first terror and dismay of the crucifixion had passed—their undoubting belief, filling them with new resolves and a more confident hope, that their Master had actually risen from the dead—above all, the clear and emphatic testimony of the Apostle Paul, in words which we have direct from himself, that he had seen and conversed with the risen Jesus. Since then, the whole evidence for the resurrection of Christ, with a consideration of these various points, has been gone over at some length in one of my courses; and as the subject has not been revived, nor any more difficulties expressed to me, I conclude that such observations on the subject have had their effect.

I do not remember any such question, as you refer to, having ever been put to me in that form; nor do I know that it has been to my colleague; but this I do not hesitate to say, in regard to both of us, that we should regard a denial of the *supernatural* in Christianity as a practical disqualification for the exercise of the ministry in our churches. That this is not mere talk, I am able to evidence by the fact, that a young man of serious mind and blameless conduct ceased to attend our lectures only last Session, because he found that such was the implied condition of the ministry amongst us, and he could not sufficiently overcome his own doubts satisfactorily to meet it.

In an Institution like ours, which professes to be based on freedom of inquiry, at a time when the whole mental atmosphere is charged with the most speculative elements of thought from our own country, from America, and from the Continent, every one must see that young men, even the most earnest and serious, cannot be kept from feeling doubts and stating difficulties. For myself, wherever I have seen a religious spirit working at bottom, I have always hoped, that a candid and sympathizing treatment, combined with an earnest recommendation to be humble, modest and cautious, and to wait patiently for deeper insight and wider

views, would bring them home at last to a vital faith in Christ. Nor have I, in the great majority of cases, been disappointed. I am sure that harsh repression and browbeating would produce the very opposite result. It is possible that, at times, rash and hasty young men, while their opinions were in process of formation, may have said things off-hand that gave a false impression even of their own deeper and more permanent views; but for this no Institution can be responsible.

I shall really feel obliged by your correcting in any quarter the false impression which has got abroad, as it may do harm both to our College and to our churches. Allow me, in conclusion, to express my regret that so many groundless and exaggerated representations should get abroad and be circulated even within the limits of our own body. I do not at all include your letter in this remark. The inquiry it contained was a most proper and reasonable one; and I only hope I have answered it to your satisfaction.

I remain, dear Sir, yours truly,

J. J. Tayler.

---

## CHANNING AND UNITARIANISM.*

The following is the translation of a notice of the above work which appeared in the January number of a French periodical, called "Le Disciple de Jesus Christ."

There are men for whom the hour of justice comes late, but for whom it is sure to come. One of the most eminent writers of Protestant America, he who has merited the glorious surname of the Fenelon of the United States, Channing, deceased nearly fifteen years, and whose influence in his own country dates from more than half a century, was till very lately almost unknown even among his co-religionists of the ancient continent. It required the voice of strangers and exceptional circumstances to reveal to us our own riches; still it is more as a *publiciste* and economist than as a religious writer that he was first made known to us.

In those years of fearful memory when France sought in a social remodelling the blessings which she thought were wanting to her, when the most celebrated political essayists found themselves condemned to fight inch by inch against the most absurd sophisms, to deal out day by day for the people the most elementary notions of the social catechism,—all at once an American author was discovered, whose intercourse with the indigent classes, and profound sympathy with their sufferings, had initiated him in early life to the study of economical problems, who

* Channing et l'Unitarisme, par Ed. Laboulaye. Traités Religieux de W. E. Channing. Paris, 1857.

had treated them with a wisdom, a depth, and at the same time with a popularity unequalled, and had long since with a courageous voice made his countrymen acquainted with those truths of which France was then the most in need, and by the simple but serious and sincere application of the precepts of the gospel, stigmatized beforehand the sterile and culpable utopias of 1848. The social works of Channing were for Europe a sort of revelation. Translated at first into German, they were soon after published in our language. One of the most distinguished French lawyers and academicians, M. Ed. Laboulaye, presented us a few years since with this precious gift. "It is not long ago," says he, in the able Preface which he puts at the head of his translation, "that chance caused the writings of Channing to fall into my hands. In reading the works of a man who had been dead twelve years, and whose name was unknown to me, I was much astonished and much puzzled to find in them the examination and the solution of those terrible problems which, under the name of Socialism, have disturbed all Europe, and which still remain in the horizon as a menace for the future.

"To consider Channing only as the Christian reformer—and why not say the Christian Socialist?—it may be affirmed that never was a man better endowed to undertake a like mission, and that no one has more skilfully or more piously accomplished it. His character and his education, his philosophical opinions as well as his religious belief, the generosity of his inclinations and the tenderness of his heart, all led him to that indefatigable and enlightened devotedness to duty which filled up and employed his life. Without political ambition (he never would be anything else than the minister of his little church), without literary vanity or illusion about what is called popularity, he never had but one thought,—to raise the condition of the poor, to sustain and support those who labour and who suffer, to hasten the reign on earth of the only fraternity which is possible,—that which has been taught us by Jesus Christ. It is in the gospel that Channing has sought a remedy for the disorders which the sages of the age pronounce incurable.

"At the present moment, society is much infected with materialism; and the government, whatever may be its form, shares all the vices of society. All is reduced to mere material prosperity, and to reach that and bestow it upon the masses, there is no emperor, king or republic, that does not think every law just and every measure legitimate. We return to Pagan ideas; the individual is nothing, the State is everything: this has been the reigning doctrine for half a century, and its last promulgation is Communism. Channing, on the contrary, proclaims the Christian principle, and brings it fully into light under a striking and new form. According to him, the individual is everything; the interests of society nothing compared with the eternal rights of

him whom God has made after his own image; or rather, the pretended interests of society which sacrifice the individual are a deception, if not a crime. Society is made for all its members; its object is to make easy a life which does not end here below, but not to sacrifice the minority to the greater number, or to replace the tyranny of one master for the tyranny of a multitude. The great duty of society is the proper governance and protection of the individual; the perfection of the state is the perfection of the citizen. To ameliorate the individual, instruct him, give him moral training,—to teach him to estimate himself at his true value,—to re-animate in his soul the sentiment of dignity and of personal nobleness which Christ has conferred on man,—to recall him continually to those duties and the respect which he owes to himself,—to consider, in short, individual action as the great spring of society,—such was the constant thought of Channing; and I say again, it is a thought eminently Christian."

The voice which thus recommended Channing is not among those which remain without an echo. From that moment, the philanthropist of Boston was adopted and, as it were, naturalized in France. His social maxims, studied with the attention of which they were worthy, soon obtained the suffrage of the principal organs of opinion.

But, as M. Laboulaye observes, there was the mind of two men in Channing,—that of a most bold theologian, and of a most charitable Christian. The sympathetic attention awakened by the philanthropist was naturally transferred to the theologian, so much the more, as Channing declared that it was from the depth of his religious faith he had imbibed the principles to which he owed his political and moral ascendency. What was then the religious faith of Channing?

An English lady, an enlightened admirer of his character and his talents, has undertaken very recently to make us acquainted with him in reference to this subject.* In a biography full of interest, borrowed in part from that which has been published in English by the nephew of Channing, and accompanied by extracts from his works and correspondence, she has traced his physiognomy in a noble and touching description which will not allow us to forget him, has let us into the secret of his religious sentiments, and in some sort described their genealogy.

She reminds us how the anti-Trinitarian and anti-Augustinian movement began in the Protestant churches in the sixteenth century, but, stopped short by the influence of the Reformers and by the edicts of Princes, after having re-appeared at a later date in Switzerland, Germany and England, was from the latter part of the last century propagated from thence into the United

* Channing, sa Vie et ses Œuvres. Paris, 1857; avec une Préface de M. Charles de Remusat.

States, and had established its head quarters in the Athens of America. She relates to us how Channing, educated and afterwards settled near Boston, had associated himself with a movement, for which he was already prepared by the result of his reflections and studies; how, upon the point of throwing off the yoke of the traditional faith of America, he had to struggle against his own scruples, against those of his relatives, and very soon against the anathemas of a retrograde press, which in America, as elsewhere, leaves sceptics and the impious in peace, to overwhelm with gall religious and independent minds; how nevertheless, supported by his conscience, he remained firm, and without giving way to severe recriminations, he permitted no one to assume a dictatorship over his faith. This critical period of the religious career of Channing has been related to us by himself in a passage which, although it has been reproduced by his biographers, naturally finds a place here:

"From my first step in life, I perceived that a new era was about to open for our country and for our age; it was the commencement of a violent struggle to restore doctrines fallen little by little into oblivion. The cry of Orthodoxy was raised, and a system of measures was adopted to stifle free inquiry. Care was taken to spread abroad vague rumours relating to a secret conspiracy against what was called the doctrines of the Reformation, the essential doctrines of Christianity: those doctrines which were espoused by some of the wisest men in America and Europe, were marked with the hot iron of heresy. If I entered into the field of controversy, it was less to defend these opinions, than to encourage my brethren to make use of their reason, and freely to examine the precepts of religion. I felt then, what I now feel with increased force, that the human mind is made to advance through liberty and by the use of its faculties; I mean that use which is reflective, impartial, independent. I would not suffer my understanding to be chained down by men who had no title to such despotism, by men in whom I often see marks of inferiority in mind and heart. I would not suffer that they should bind down others. I felt what disgrace would fall upon our enlightened society and upon ourselves, if we endured that a handful of men (there was not then, and even now there is not more) should be permitted to dictate to us opinions upon the most important object of thought, and reduce to silence the sincere friends of truth."

Such manifestations so courageously declared, in reconciling elevated minds more and more to Channing, made them desire to be still better acquainted with principles capable of producing such strong and serene convictions. It is to satisfy this legitimate curiosity that M. Laboulaye has lately published, as a sequel to the first collection of the works of Channing, the religious treatises announced at the head of this article. If his

social works have shewn him to be an ardent philanthropist and enlightened friend of the indigent classes, his discourses upon the Church, upon the proofs of Christianity, upon Religion as a social principle, upon Christianity as a reasonable religion, upon a Future Life, &c. &c., have revealed him to us as a persuasive apologist, a profound moralist, a preacher, if not dazzling by his style at least captivating by sentiment and thought,—in a word, a Christian philosopher full of elevation and originality,—full, above all, of disinterestedness and rectitude. It is this last quality which appears to us to have principally struck his French editors.

"There are perhaps," says M. Laboulaye, "more eloquent orators than Channing; there are none more sincere, there are none in whom the heart is more conspicuous. It is this which makes the infinite charm of his reasoning. In hearing Channing, you are sure that there is not a word which he has not felt, not a truth which he has not proved, not a counsel which he has not tried upon himself; you therefore yield without mistrust to this voice, so gentle and so penetrating. It is not a preacher who is speaking; it is much better, a brother and a friend."

A similar judgment, not less eloquent, has been formerly expressed by M. Ch. de Remusat:

"In our days, the flight of thought no longer rises above the earth; heaven is scarcely remembered; many of those who speak of it by profession ill conceal a secret attachment to the interests of the world. Power and success hold too large a place in their minds, and little by little moral authority escapes them; they are not aware of it, but nevertheless they are going backwards. The people long to hear the sound of voices more pure and more disinterested, and they seek for them anxiously, although perhaps silently; they want to meet with minds exclusively interested by the love of moral beauty, of truth and of holiness. They can improve by their example, and by intercourse with them, without necessarily following them in all things. It seems that such is the fruit which may be gathered from the work now referred to: happy those who can find in their own hearts the sentiments which have dictated it!"

Were Channing now living, no suffrages, we believe, would have more value in his eyes than those which we have just reported. He who, especially since 1830, full of sympathy and love for France, was so much the more anxious for her religious future; who saw clearly that she could neither return to the Catholicism of the 13th century, nor accept the Protestantism of the 16th; he who so anxiously sought information as to the favourable chances which a purer Christianity might have there, and who in the mean time lamented to see her given up to indifference and incredulity,—with what joy would he have learned that the principles which were so dear to him began to find in that country among the most noble representatives of science, those who were disposed to appreciate them!

Albeit we doubt whether, even to hasten the triumph of his principles in France, he would have consented, as one of his apologists seems to intimate, to renounce his title of Unitarian, or to deny the influence of Unitarianism on his particular view of religion.

If Unitarianism only designated one of those sects which are so common in the United States, who know of no salvation but in the adoption of their creed, and exclude every one who separates from it from their sympathy and charity, no one could be less a Unitarian than Channing. For who was more a stranger than he to the hateful passions of party? Who better than he knew how to comprehend the inevitable and providential diversity of mind, or by making an equitable allowance for the influence of education and the traditions of family, to estimate men independently of their outward professions? Who, indeed, has proved more zealously than he the necessity of union among all those who love Jesus and call upon God with a pure heart? If the customs of America had permitted him, he would have refused to attach himself to any congregation, to any particular church, in order to keep up a freer communion with pious Christians of every sect, of every place, and of every time.

"There is," says he, in one of his sermons, "one grand, all-comprehending church; and if I am a Christian I belong to it, and no man can shut me out of it. You may indeed exclude me from your Roman Church, your Episcopal Church, your Calvinistic Church, on account of supposed defects in my creed or in my sect; and I am content to be so excluded. But I will not consent to be severed from the great body of Christ. Who shall sunder me from such men as Fenelon, Pascal and Borromeo, from Archbishop Leighton, from Jeremy Taylor and John Howard? Who can sever the spiritual bond between these men and myself? Do I not hold them dear? Does not their spirit, flowing out through their writings and lives, penetrate my soul? Are they not a portion of my being? Am I not a different man from what I should have been, had not these and other like spirits acted upon mine? And is it in the power of synod or conclave, or of all the ecclesiastical combinations on earth, to part me from them?"

We do not see that these enlarged principles were any detriment to him among the congregation of which he was a member, nor that he had any trouble to make them participators in the same feelings. Assuredly, therefore, if we see nothing in Unitarianism but a step further in the negation of ancient dogmas, a protestation purely rational against some articles of Catholic faith maintained by the Reformation of the 16th century, Channing, upon this footing only, would not be a Unitarian. It is in this sense perhaps that he shewed himself removed from the rather cold Unitarianism of Priestley; for his came from another source. The Athanasian and the Augustinian dogmas were no

doubt deeply repulsive to his reason, but they were still more repulsive to his heart and to his Christian conscience. Unitarianism, on the contrary, which, while proclaiming the celestial mission of Jesus, demands for his Father alone the attributes of a divine nature; which establishes in the most absolute sense the spirituality of God, the infinity and indivisibility of his essence; which, instead of abasing Him to man, strives to raise man to Him; which shews to man, in the purification of his desires, in the ennoblement of his soul, in his more intimate union with God, the only way to salvation, or rather salvation itself; which neither leaves him the excuse of a hereditary and invincible corruption, nor the deceitful assurance of a salvation accomplished in him without his concurrence; which makes him consider, in short, the deliverance from moral evil as the great object for which Jesus came into the world;—Unitarianism, under all these aspects, appeared to him eminently proper to form an elevated religious character, to develop in man a sanctifying and profoundly-felt Christianity. In pleading its cause, it was the cause of Christianity itself that he felt he was pleading; it is this thought which he develops in numerous passages in his works; it is in particular the theme of some of his discourses not yet published.

In reading these discourses, it will be seen at once that Channing was in no way disposed to abdicate his title of Unitarian; and at the risk even of adjourning the triumph of his doctrines, he had rejected the well-meant justifications of those who feared for him the prejudices attached to that name. What mattered to him the invectives of few or many narrow-minded spirits, provided that he brought back to religion some sincere souls driven away by orthodoxy? It was for them that he raised the standard of Unitarianism; he carried it the higher, that it required in his time more courage to bear it. If, as M. Laboulaye supposes, "Unitarianism, as the ultimate term of free inquiry, be destined to take a high position in the history of religion, and if to it belongs the future of Protestantism," the confidence of Channing is fully justified.

For ourselves, however, we will not go so far in this respect as the eloquent translator: whatever may be the value of the ideas of Channing, we do not think that with him Protestant theology has said its last word. Thrown early by the circumstances of his church and country into the vortex of active life, he was too much occupied by the practical applications of Christianity to be able sufficiently to probe its speculative side; he lived with men more than with books, and could only acquire within certain limits the historical and critical knowledge necessary for the accomplished theologian. It is for his disciples to complete the work in this point of view: he himself, with the disinterested modesty which characterized him, has invited them to do so with all his power.

"No one of us," says he, "possesses Christianity in its purity. I feel but too much the imperfections of all classes and of all communions. All the hope of Christianity reposes upon the courage and the piety of those who reject all human authority, who break the bonds of every creed, and who give themselves up to a reflective, pious and constant study of the Almighty, of his works and of providence. Freedom of thought, joined to the sincere acceptance of all truth already known, that is what constitutes the energy and the spirit which ought to emancipate the world and the church from that crowd of errors which still obstruct religion, and weaken its holy influence."

In expectation of this progress, which is being carried forward in Unitarian theology, but which time alone can bring to maturity, Channing is without doubt one of the religious preceptors best suited for the times in which we live.

Long enough, and more than long enough, it has been thought that, to cure the disorders of our age, it was sufficient to re-galvanize the past, to exhume and reinstate ancient creeds. What has as yet been gained? People have allowed this question to be asked, but they have not answered it. They saw too clearly the worldly interests which concealed themselves under this religious reaction. Not long since, the Evangelical assembly of Berlin inquired, why the return to ancient confessions of faith has not been attended with the re-awakening of piety among the flock? This question, proposed by an orthodox assembly with regard to the dogmatic articles which it represented, includes a very suggestive confession, and the answers which have been given to it do not give less serious cause for reflection. What is true of Germany is perhaps more so elsewhere. "One requires," says M. de Remusat, "to hear voices more disinterested and more pure." Now that of Channing is at the same time one of the most unctuous and the most persuasive. If his doctrine cannot serve to found new churches (and it will be seen that he himself did not look to that), it will re-attach at least to religion many souls who find themselves out of harmony with existing churches. Over how many doubts has it not already triumphed? how many consciences has it not re-assured? and of how many young theologians has it re-animated the ardour, by re-establishing in them the unison so necessary between intelligence and faith? We are, besides, far from having enumerated all the merits of Channing. To the elevation of the theologian, he joined, like Vinet, all the acuteness of the critic. His essays on Fenelon and Milton, so remarkable in a religious point of view, are not less so in a literary one. May those, then, who have begun to interpret him for us with so much fidelity and elegance, persevere to make him still more known! May they use their best efforts to translate into our tongue all the works of the theologian of Boston! They cannot, I repeat, supply our generation with nutriment more wholesome and more substantial.

## THE MINISTER OF THE "RETROSPECT" IN REPLY TO REV. J. C. MEANS.

Sir,

I am obliged by your candour in opening another page for me in reply to Mr. Means, when I have already occupied so much of your space. But indeed it is no purpose of mine to enter into controversy afresh. My work in that department, as in most others, is done. In giving a "Retrospect" of my work and experience as a Minister, I am not arguing any great questions over again when I record the fact of their having been argued before, or state even the arguments which have led me or others to certain conclusions. I put these things on record as the actual facts of my ministerial life and experience; and as such I can have no alteration to make in them in consequence of any criticism passed on them by your readers.

I should indeed be sorry to be considered disingenuous by such a man as Mr. Means (whom, though I have not the pleasure of knowing personally, I esteem for his excellent repute among those who have). But I do not believe he will keep this impression of the moral quality of what I have done and said on Baptism. He has come to one conclusion; I to another. I go with him further in my views of the *mode*, &c. of New Testament Baptism than many do who with me reject his practical conclusion. And for this it seems to me he marks my reasonings as disingenuous;—because I cannot go with him altogether. They may be right or they may be wrong; convincing or not to other persons; but they are quite sincere, and deliberately formed too. I have relinquished into the hands of the adult Baptist all the scriptural ground on which the battle has been most weakly fought, for infant baptism and for sprinkling as the supposed apostolic mode. I regard the New Testament baptism as properly temporary, and in that view as having most especial significancy. And I consider myself free to recognize the natural dictate of the Christian heart on the opening of the parental relation; just as the adult Baptist is free (and I too) to recognize the desire of the religious young adult for confirmation of one kind or another. He accommodates the New Testament baptism to this latter purpose, and I do not call him disingenuous. I hardly consider my practice an accommodation of that rite, but rather as the adoption of a Christian baptism suitable to that condition of society in which Christian influences begin with life itself. The name, rather than the thing, seems, after all, to displease him in my use of it; but I need not remind Mr. Means that there were diverse kinds of *baptisms* known among the Jews (see Mark vii. 4 and 8; Heb. vi. 2); and, as I think I have remarked in my "Retrospect," I cannot regard the adult Baptist as having any lawful monopoly in pure water as a symbol of the infant's innocence or the Christian's virtue. Then why should he monopolize the name of Baptism? For myself, I care little for the name, but I greatly approve the thing, whether called Infant Dedication or Infant Baptism. And when I have performed such a ceremony without the accompaniment of water, I have called it by the former name; when with that expressive emblem, I have called it by the latter. Disingenuousness in the matter was the last thing I could expect to be charged with.

I do not resume the Baptismal controversy; but have given a true retrospect of what I have done and seen in it in my more active days.

The Minister of the "Retrospect."

# INTELLIGENCE.

DOMESTIC MISSION SOCIETY, MANCHESTER.

On Monday evening, May 10th, a meeting of the above Society was held in Lower Mosley-Street school-rooms, to hear the report of their Minister to the Poor, the Rev. Francis Bishop; to take leave of him on his retirement from their Mission; and to welcome his successor, the Rev. E. W. Hopkinson, formerly a student of the Home Missionary Board. About one hundred persons assembled and took tea together; the Revds. W. Gaskell, M.A., J. Panton Ham, J. H. Hutton, B.A., J. J. Bishop, B.A., F. Bishop, E. W. Hopkinson, and many influential laymen, were present. After tea, the Rev. W. Gaskell was called to take the chair. Mr. Gaskell expressed his regret that a great many of the wealthy friends of the Mission were unavoidably absent. He said that there were several unfortunate circumstances connected with the meeting, which was a small one in comparison with the last: many of the friends had made positive engagements for the evening before that meeting was announced, and the congregation of Dr. Beard in Strangeways were that evening holding a soirée of their own. He said that the Domestic Mission in Manchester was the first institution of the kind established in this country; but, for some reason or other, the Manchester congregations had never shewn that interest in it which he thought it deserved. He had been acquainted with the Mission for twenty years, and for eighteen years had held the office of Secretary. He said there was no institution so thoroughly Christian in character: the more he had become acquainted with the work of the Mission, the more he felt the necessity and importance of such institutions. It seemed to him that every thoughtful mind must feel that the points of contact between the different classes of society were very few, and the various classes required more frequently and intimately to be brought together. One great good arising from the Mission was that it formed another link between the various classes, and helped to bridge over the great gulf, and provided a highway by which messages might be carried from the rich to the poor. This seemed one great advantage. There was a striking passage in one of Mr. Ruskin's pamphlets, where he was trying to shew how difficult it was fully to enter into the realities of poverty and misery which abound in the world. He pictured a grand dinner-party, where the wealthy guests were all assembled, surrounded by abundant signs of wealth and luxury and magnificence, and asked what would be the effect upon those people if suddenly there stood before them a host of ragged, squalid and starving creatures? Whether they would be satisfied to give simply the remnants from their table? He thought not. He (Mr. G.) proceeded to say that the Domestic Mission did give a glimpse of that poverty and wretchedness, with which they could not otherwise become acquainted. The Mission in Manchester had now been in existence for twenty-five years, and though it had not been as successful as could have been wished, yet it was satisfactory to know how much good it had done, how it had ministered to cases of sickness and distress, and brought the truths of religion to the bed of death, which without the agency of the Mission would never have been known. Those who worked through the instrumentality of the Mission might be sure they were really doing good. Much that was called charity did not deserve that holy name, but there was no need of doubt in the work done through the Mission. Mr. Gaskell concluded by calling upon Rev. F. Bishop to read his report.

Rev. Francis Bishop in his report referred to the history and the special aims of the Ministry to the Poor. It is essentially a religious work. It is designed to bring under the influences of Christianity those who are now shut out from the means of moral and religious culture. There is great need for such a ministry in the present day. The great majority of the working classes of this country stand outside of the Christian church, and are untouched by its direct operations. There is in Manchester and in all our large communities a dense mass of humanity spiritually dead in the midst of the most active material life. Not only are the ignorant and degraded, but many of the thoughtful and industrious among the people, in a position, if not of positive opposition, at least of negative indifference in regard to religion. Not that the multitudes who shew this disregard are unbelievers. There are but very few among them who have bent their minds seriously to the subject of religion, and after deliberate inquiry rejected its claims. The metaphysics of Owenism, leading to a denial of all religion, still had a hold on some minds, though there was no longer any public agitation

on the subject. Other forms of unbelief, too, he had met with, which he briefly described; but whether regarded singly or collectively, their prevalence was limited and their influence small. There was rather a preparedness among the people to listen to religious appeals with respect; and if the Church would come out from its serene retirements, and, in the spirit of its Founder, venture into actual contact with the great mass of the community, it would be gratefully welcomed. Mr. Bishop proceeded to enter somewhat into detail as to the agencies he had set on foot. The students of the Home Missionary Board had made under his direction about 19,000 visits, chiefly in connection with the District Provident Society. The number of visits he had himself made was upwards of 5,000. Nearly the whole of these had been of a purely missionary character, made day after day, and at all seasons and hours, according as circumstances demanded. In these visits he had often been struck with the power of religion to brighten the gloomiest scenes, and he had seen that the lines of Cowper were not without their counterpart in life:

"Oh, blessed effect of penury and want,
The seed sown there, how vig'rous the plant;
No soil like poverty for growth divine,
As leanest land supplies the richest wine."

It was true there are influences in poverty which sometimes act as subversive of the very principles of hope and happiness; yet there are also many, very many, cases in which the gospel is not preached to the poor in vain,—in which the ear that can listen to little else with gladness, is opened with visible pleasure to the glad tidings of salvation,—in which the eye that has done with earthly smiles and tears, can brighten yet at the reading of a simple hymn or a simple chapter in the Bible. It had often been his fortune to go with a hope to teach where he soon felt that he ought to learn; and to listen with feelings which he could not describe to outpourings of heart, bruised perhaps and broken but not corrupted, which seemed to him to embody a sublimer panegyric upon religious faith than ever came from the lips of its most eloquent defenders. Mr. Bishop described some of these scenes, and after referring to some of the habits and opinions of different classes of the Manchester workers, went on to speak of the direct efforts that had been made in connection with the Mission to cure and check the sin of drunkenness, whose ravages he was compelled to witness almost every day. "It is intemperance," he continued, "which both shortens life and makes it wretched. It is this which brings down men's hairs before they are grey with sorrow to the grave. It is this which fills the Hospital with diseased bodies, and the Asylum with diseased minds, and the Penitentiary with broken hearts, and the garret and cellar with the miserable living, and the sick bed with the hopeless dying, and the grave with the untimely dead. My heart sickens at the dark retrospect of what I have seen connected with this moral plague." He went on at some length on this subject, and spoke of the glad results that had followed from the labours of a Temperance Association connected with the Mission. He also referred in detail to the week-evening classes, the Sunday services and Sunday-schools, the cottage meetings, and other agencies which he had employed in his work, and in conclusion expressed the deep regret he felt at being compelled,—by the impossibility, without regular assistance, of attending to all the duties of a prosperous and growing Mission, in addition to his work connected with the Home Missionary Board,—to sever himself from a ministry that was, and must ever remain, very dear to his heart, and in which eleven of the best years of his life had been spent.

Mr. E. Bowman then read an abstract of the financial report, by which it appeared that £245. 0*s.* 5*d.* was due to the Treasurer.

Mr. R. Nicholson moved that Mr. Bishop's report, together with that of the Treasurer, be printed for circulation. He said he was sure that it was impossible to have heard the report which had just been read, without feeling very great regret that they were about to lose the services of Mr. Bishop. He could, however, assure the meeting that although the annual reports were always very interesting, the reports which were given to the Mission Committee, of which he was a member, month by month, were such as to make any one feel that his subscription was not at all commensurate with the great good done by their Minister to the Poor. He was sure, if they could hear those monthly reports regularly, they would be convinced that there was no way in which they could spend their money better than in supporting the Mission Society. The balance due to the Treasurer was very great. He would suggest that every member present that night should make a point of getting a new subscriber. He hoped that all who were present would feel it was their duty to try to increase their subscriptions. The state of the accounts was a disgrace to the Society.

Mr. C. Boult seconded the motion, which was unanimously carried.

E. Shawcross, Esq., moved, and — Heape, Esq., seconded, a vote of thanks to the retiring officers, and included a resolution for the appointment of officers for the ensuing year.

E. Bowman, Esq., moved—"That this meeting desires to express its regret at the loss of the valuable services of the Rev. Francis Bishop, which have raised the Domestic Mission to so efficient a state; and to offer him their best wishes for his comfort and improved health in his new field of labour." Mr. Bowman said he never rose to move a resolution with more sincerity and agreement with it than this. It was two years ago since he had to move a resolution of welcome to Mr. Bishop; they then welcomed him with high anticipations; he thought they would all acknowledge that those anticipations had not been in the least disappointed. They gave the Mission into the hands of Mr. Bishop when it was in a decayed state; he had restored it into one of vigour. On account of the death of their last minister, the Mission was in a state of suspended animation, though the valuable and timely assistance of Mr. Broom must not be forgotten. Mr. Bishop had solved a difficult problem. He believed that every one who knew anything about the state of the Mission would acknowledge that he had done it well and thoroughly. Instead of failing, it was now successful; so much so, that even Mr. Bishop's energies, which they knew were great, were unable to meet its requirements. He was sure that when they looked at what Mr. Bishop had done for them, they would most sincerely join in that expression of regret contained in the resolution; they would acknowledge with heartfelt gratitude to him their recognition of his great and noble efforts, and regret that they were obliged to lose his valuable services. With respect to the Sunday-school, it was now in a state of perfect efficiency. And Mr. Bishop had not only worked himself in these matters, but he had enlisted others in his work, men residing in the neighbourhood, who, under the name of the Working Men's Auxiliary, have aided the minister in his work. Mr. Bowman hoped that the succeeding minister would be enabled to carry on the Mission in a similar state of efficiency. Still he could not but feel deep regret that they should have to part with the man who certainly held the first place among them in the country in the Mission field. He certainly felt ashamed when he thought that the Manchester City Mission raised thousands of pounds annually, and that they did so little. They must do more; they must double their subscriptions, and do much more than they had done. He had no doubt that the relief which Mr. Bishop would feel from his present arduous duties would lead to the restoration of his health. He would leave them with their most heartfelt wishes for his good. He would take with him their best wishes and great respect, and also of those whom he had helped in their difficulties and sorrows. The consciousness of these things would be one which would strengthen him in his future labours.

Rev. J. Panton Ham, in seconding the motion, said, he did not know if ever he arose with more regret than on that occasion. He scarcely dare speak his mind fully, lest he should say things which would seem hardly decorous from him. It appeared to him a matter of great regret, and also of deep reproach, that they should allow Mr. Bishop to leave them in the way he did. It seemed that Manchester established the first Mission in England; they invited the first man in connection with Mission operations; the most efficient man was invited to come to the first Mission; they were only able to keep him two years, two years of trials, and now he must leave them because he had not had adequate support. He thought that if they had taken proper steps, they might have prevented Mr. Bishop from going away. Mr. Bishop was only able to be here as their missionary by his holding a second office; he had found that the duties of the two departments were more than he could perform, and he had been compelled to give them up. Now he (Mr. H.) did think they ought, as a Committee, to have mentioned to the friends and supporters of the Mission that Mr. B. could not properly sustain the two offices, and they would not have permitted him to leave now. He did not think the City Missions at all comparable to their Missions, and yet how well the City Missions were supported compared to theirs. He could not let Mr. Bishop go in this way; he felt it was a matter of reproach to them, and for friends, if they only knew the real cause, to feel a still deeper regret that they were not able to prevent the loss. He mourned deeply over it; he blushed for the Unitarians of Manchester; they had had the best man, and now they were the means of his leaving the work to which the best energies of his life had been devoted. They were the means of allowing him to give up the work to which he had been entirely devoted. He was very sorry indeed that Mr. Bishop was going away, and he joined in the hope

that he might be happy and useful, and he regretted that they had ever allowed him to leave them.

Rev. W. Gaskell, in putting the resolution, said, Mr. Bishop could not, he was assured, part from this work without a feeling of regret; but he must look with satisfaction at the time of his stay in Manchester, in making the Mission so successful, and leaving it in such efficiency as it now is.

Rev. F. Bishop said he could not refrain from acknowledging, though he felt he must do so most inadequately, the great kindness which had been expressed, and the friendly and warm feeling which had been called forth by the two gentlemen who had addressed them, and the manner in which they had expressed their sentiments. He thanked them most heartily for that vote; it would be folly in him to say he did not value such a testimonial; he did value it, and did not hesitate to say that he felt such supports to be exceedingly encouraging. He should be sorry to be indifferent to the feelings of those whom he esteemed. He felt that they had not been known to each other so well as they ought to have been. He had felt it was necessary that they should have known something more of their Minister to the Poor than they did by meeting him at the annual meetings; that they should know the work he had to do, the trials which he had to encounter, the successes which sometimes cheered him, the failures which sometimes caused him pain. If they knew these things, they would feel it was a most important work, and how admirably calculated it was to advance the interests of their fellow-men. He would urge upon them not to let the districts which the students had opened be abandoned, but endeavour themselves to find a band of visitors, ladies and gentlemen, who would supply their places. In doing so, they would much strengthen the hands of Mr. Hopkinson. It was, he thought, rather a reflection upon them that their Mission here, the oldest Mission in the country, should be in any respect in a languishing condition. He was quite sure that he knew enough of the Manchester Unitarians to say, that, if they were fully informed of the nature of the work, they would never allow the funds of their Society to be in their present state. He was sure they would pardon him for these remarks. Again he thanked them for the kind expression of regard to himself, and he certainly should look back upon it with very grateful feelings.

Rev. J. H. Hutton then moved, "That this meeting offers a cordial welcome to Mr. Hopkinson at his entrance upon the duties of his important office, and implores the Divine blessing on him and his work." He was sure they all desired to express to Mr. Hopkinson a welcome on his undertaking the arduous labours he would there engage in. Mr. Bishop had had the experience of many years; Mr. Hopkinson was almost a stranger to the work. On this account he would not the less receive the support of the members of that Society. He (Mr. Hutton) felt how difficult it was to express in the same meeting the regrets felt at the departure of Mr. Bishop and the welcome towards Mr. Hopkinson. He knew enough of the latter to be assured that he would endeavour to carry on the Mission in the same earnest and unsectarian spirit in which Mr. Bishop had done; that he would give his best efforts to it; and that he would be supported by every member of the Committee. He thought Mr. Hopkinson would find, as Mr. Bishop had indeed hinted, that he was not merely a giver of help and sympathy and support to the poor, but that he was also a recipient. He felt convinced that Mr. H. would find this to be the case, even if he were not supported, though no doubt he would be, by the friends of the Mission; that he would be deriving new experiences, and a greater sense of the importance and responsibilities of life. After some further remarks, Mr. H. concluded by saying he thought they could hardly welcome Mr. Hopkinson to a more serious and religious occupation than that to which they now welcomed him.

Mr. Leppoc seconded the motion, and after expressing his deep regret at the departure of Mr. Bishop from among them, and at the disgraceful state of the funds, he turned to Mr. Hopkinson and said with much heartiness—"I cannot say more than Mr. Hutton has already said. You enter upon a field that has been partly cleared before you; it will require all your courage and strength to keep it in its present state of usefulness. I have no doubt you will do your best. I am quite sure you will have the support of every friend of the Mission. If at any time you need advice or help, I can assure you we shall all be happy to help you. I bid you welcome, a free and hearty welcome." Mr. Leppoc here stepped across the room, and most warmly shook Mr. Hopkinson by the hand, and the meeting testified its hearty welcome by loud and prolonged cheers.

Rev. W. Gaskell read an extract from a letter of Dr. Beard's, saying—"I regret that the two meetings should have happened at the same time. I the more regret it, because I should have been glad to have

taken part in welcoming Mr. Hopkinson. My words might have been few, but they would have been very cordial, for, as you know, I entertain a very high opinion of him as a man and as a Christian, and of his qualifications for the honourable office on which he is about to enter." Mr. Gaskell added—I can say with perfect truth and sincerity, So do I. We have known him well, as having been his teachers. He has impressed me with a very high idea of his earnestness of purpose and goodness of heart, and I believe from his experience he will be found admirably adapted to the office which he is called upon to fill. I am sure, if you give him the support which he deserves and ought to receive, you will find the Mission in a still more prosperous state even than it is at present. I will only say, it will always afford me the utmost pleasure to give Mr. Hopkinson the greatest help I possibly can, either by exchanges with him or by any other means; he may always freely apply to me.

Rev. E. W. Hopkinson then rose and said—I am exceedingly obliged to you for the very kind and cordial welcome you have now given me. I feel it will be due from me to say a few words, and they will be few. The work upon which I am about to enter here in Manchester is one of the greatest importance and interest to my mind and heart. I am deeply sensible that it is a work which will demand earnest thought, firm faith and untiring perseverance. Ever since I had the least practical knowledge of missionary labour, I have felt that it was no smooth and easy thing, which a person might begin and go on with as a mere matter of course. Convinced that the duties which lie before me as Minister to the Poor will be both many and arduous, that they will call for the exercise of every power of body and mind in me, and for large experience (and my experience at present is but small), I do not now stand before you prepared to say that I shall be fully equal to them all; I can only say that, with the blessing of God, I shall try to be equal to them. I must say that I look forward with hope and pleasure to the work in which I am to be engaged, because it will bring me into daily intercourse with those who labour with their hands for their daily bread. Having up to the time when I became a student of the Home Missionary Board been one of the working class myself, it is, I believe, the working class that I am fitted to address and reach with most satisfaction to myself. When I say with most satisfaction to myself, I do not mean an idle satisfaction, arising out of the mistaken notion that they are to be put off with much less of thought and good sound sense than their wealthier brethren. They may not care so much as the more refined and educated about the elaborate turning of a period, but they will not listen long to strings of words into which but few thoughts ever find their way. It is with them that I have through life had the greatest practical acquaintance; I know something of their modes of thought and states of feeling; and I trust that I shall always go amongst them, not with the petty, proud thought that I am above them, and that to speak with them requires a sort of condescension on my part; but with the thought that I am one of them, whose duty and privilege as a man and as a brother it is to impart to them by the way-side of life what of good I have. It will be my endeavour, as best I can, to carry the truths and consolations of religion into their homes. I can do this with the inward assurance that the views and principles of our Unitarian Christianity, which I hold dear and sacred, are those which have most effectually met, and do still meet, the deepest wants of my own moral and religious nature, and that they are the best calculated to meet the deepest moral and religious wants of others. I am, however, persuaded that in order to make those around me know and feel something of the real power and blessedness of Christianity, it must be a living power in my own soul. It was such in Tuckerman and in Johns,—men whom I feel that I shall follow at a very great distance indeed. My prayer is, that I may have more and more of his spirit "who went about doing good," "who came to seek and to save that which was lost;" for it is, I am satisfied, only by having something of Christ's living faith in God, and man, and goodness, and by making him the life of my inner life, that any permanent good can be the result of my future labours, either here or elsewhere.

A vote of thanks was then accorded to the Chairman, and the meeting terminated about ten o'clock.

---

### OPENING OF THE UNITARIAN CHAPEL AT SWINTON.

The chapel and spacious school-room, of which the foundation-stone was with fitting ceremony laid in the spring of last year, were completed early in the present year. The school-room has indeed been for some time in use, but the opening of the chapel was delayed till Wednesday, May 12, when the interesting event took place in the presence of a numerous assemblage of friends. The building more

than fulfils the expectations of those interested in it, both as to the convenience of the arrangements and the good taste and simple beauty of its architecture. The façade is divided into three sections by buttresses wrought in red and white brick, with substantial stone dressings, and the simple door is surmounted by a lancet window in three divisions. The elevation has the character of a very neat, unpretending Gothic chapel. The ground in front of the chapel, protected by an iron palisade, is laid out neatly, and planted and adorned with flowers. This was done at the suggestion of some working men of the village, amongst whom there is a considerable taste for gardening. Each of the sides of the chapel has five windows, and externally there is a substantial buttress between each window. There is a gallery at the south end, behind the pulpit, for the organ and the accommodation of the choir. The roof is open-timbered, and the pews are oak-stained. The pulpit and the organ are the gift of Mr. J. A. Turner, M.P., having been previously in use at his private chapel at Pendlebury. The effect of the interior is, considering the simplicity and economy of the plan, very pleasing. There is accommodation for nearly 300 persons. The chapel is, as a whole, a copy of one near Worsley, of which Mr. Sugden, of Leek, is the architect. The school-room at the south end of the chapel is admirably fitted for its purpose, the proportions being 10 yards by 8, lofty and *well ventilated*, an advantage too often unwisely overlooked in our schools. Both the chapel and school buildings are heated by Stewart and Smith's (of Sheffield) patent gill-air-warmer. The efficacy of the plan has been satisfactorily tested in the school-room during the winter. The temperature is easily maintained by it at 55 deg. to 60 deg., without burning the oxygen.

The opening day was very favourable, and among the friends present were Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Turner and family, Mr. and Mrs. W. Rayner Wood, Mr. Ivie Mackie, the Mayor of Manchester, Mr. R. T. Heape, the Mayor of Rochdale, Mr. Carver, Mr. J. C. Darbishire, Mr. S. Leigh, Mr. Booth, Rev. William Gaskell and Mrs. Gaskell, Rev. J. P. Ham, Rev. Dr. Beard, Rev. R. B. Aspland, Rev. F. Bishop, Rev. John Wright, Rev. M. C. Frankland, Rev. H. Green and Rev. W. Whitelegg. The devotional service was impressively conducted by Rev. J. Panton Ham, who read as Scripture lessons passages from 1 Chron. xxix. and Mark xi. The sermon, by Rev. W. Gaskell, was from Jude, 20th verse. In a very striking exordium, the preacher dedicated the building in which for the first time they had assembled, to the worship of the One God; to Christian liberty; to Christian fellowship and good works; to the sanctifying of the various relations of human life, and making earth a vestibule of heaven. For the edification of strangers not of the Unitarian household of faith, Mr. Gaskell then gave a brief but happy justification of the religious principles of Unitarians. The discourse closed with some weighty and timely counsel to the flock intending to worship there. A collection was made in behalf of the building fund, amounting to £33.

Soon after the close of the service, a very large number of the visitors and friends (we believe upwards of 170) sat down to a substantial dinner in the school-room and in a temporary room constructed for the occasion in the yard. The comforts of the guests were most hospitably cared for by Mr. Boardman and others living in the neighbourhood of the chapel. The tables were furnished from the cottage houses in the village, and the cottagers (members of the congregation) cooked the dinner. The supply of hot potatoes was such as is seldom seen at a public dinner, and never out of Lancashire and the vicinity. These things may appear trifles; but when we are describing the opening of a *working men's chapel* (and such Swinton is), such incidents indicate the deep interest taken by the class whose religious interests will be served in this chapel.

After the dining-room was cleared, the whole of the guests were enabled to unite in one party, under the presidency of Mr. J. A. Turner, M.P. In opening the proceedings, he expressed his great satisfaction and pleasure in meeting his friends on such an occasion. The work now happily brought to a close had excited great interest for some months past. He thought they had not erred in erecting a building unsuitable for their purposes: while it had no great pretensions, it was not a mere barn, devoid of taste, but hit the happy medium, and was an ecclesiastical building not discreditable to the Unitarian cause. All concerned had done their duty in the way of subscriptions. He was happy to think they had not opened with a burthen of debt. Of all things, he most disliked being in debt. Through life he had endeavoured to avoid it as one of the greatest evils. No one ought to attempt to possess what he cannot pay for. By their own exertions and the assistance of liberal friends they had been able to pay the bills for the erection of their chapel, and could

say it was their own, and turn it to the uses for which it had been erected. Mr. Turner then proceeded to specify the names of friends to whom they were indebted for sympathy, from several of whom letters had been received expressive of regret at not being able to join in the opening service.—After the usual loyal and other toasts, the Chairman proposed one doing homage to the memory of Unitarian worthies of past days. In speaking on the toast, he said—I cannot but feel proud in thinking that my grandfather (Rev. W. Turner, of Wakefield) was the confidential adviser and intimate friend of Dr. Priestley. He was bound by ties of friendship not less strong with another good man whose name is placed in our list of worthies, Theophilus Lindsey. In 1769, my grandfather, along with Dr. Priestley, his intimate friend, paid a visit to Archdeacon Blackburne, and during that visit they were introduced to Mr. Lindsey. On that occasion they had long conferences together, and the convictions of Mr. Lindsey were completed, and he saw that duty demanded from him an open confession of his new faith. After his resignation of the living of Catterick, my grandfather was one of the first to receive him within his house. On the night of their first day's journey, with no worldly prospects before them, with only God's providence for their guide, Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey came to Wakefield. By every Unitarian the memory of Mr. Lindsey is held in profound esteem. To the firmness and courage of such confessors we owe it that our doctrines have struck root in the public mind. To their exertions and example we owe it that we are able to erect such buildings as this, and to meet without fear or hindrance on such occasions as these to acknowledge and promote our religious opinions.

We are precluded by want of space from extending our report of the proceedings of this pleasant social meeting. The principal speakers were Rev. T. E. Poynting, Rev. John Wright, Mr. Rushton, Rev. Dr. Beard, Rev. W. Gaskell and Rev. J. Panton Ham. Honest and warm congratulations were offered to Mr. William Boardman, to whose judicious and untiring zeal the society at Swinton owes so much, on the great success which had crowned his exertions.

On the following Sunday, the opening services were continued, and were attended by crowded congregations, including many strangers, who were evidently much impressed by what they heard. In the morning, Rev. T. E. Poynting, of Monton, preached from Ezra v. 9—11; in the afternoon, Rev. John Wright, of Bury, from Rom. viii. 16; and in the evening, Rev. J. R. Beard, D.D., preached from Matt. xviii. 20. The neighbouring chapel of Monton Green being closed, many of the congregation attended the several services of the day, and the choir, headed by their organist, Mr. Wadsworth, gave their efficient services. In the morning there was a baptism, by Rev. T. E. Poynting, of an infant member of the flock. On the first Sunday in June, it is intended to hold the first celebration of the Lord's Supper in this new house of prayer. The collections of the day amounted to about £32. The total cost of the chapel and school has been £1200, and never was money more carefully expended; and we hope the permanent results will prove as satisfactory to the Unitarians of Swinton as were the opening services. We cannot, in conclusion, avoid reminding our readers that the first infant essay of this religious society, some thirty-four years ago, was a gathering, week by week, of the neighbours of the late Mr. Boardman to hear him read the early numbers of the *Christian Reformer*. Let the seed of truth be planted in faith, and who need distrust its growing up into a goodly tree!

---

### UNITARIAN YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION, BELFAST.

We have much pleasure in noticing the formation in Belfast of an Association among the young men connected with the Unitarian body,—a movement which we feel will be no less useful as an aid to the church, as it is an example worthy of being followed by the young men of our denomination throughout the United Kingdom.

A large and influential meeting was held at Belfast on the 29th March, in the meeting-house of the Second Congregation, when the expediency of forming an Association having met with general approval, a provisional committee was nominated to prepare rules and to transact such other preliminary business as appeared necessary for the attainment of the desired object. A second re-union took place on April 14th, when Herbert Darbishire, Esq., occupied the chair. The Association having been embodied and a code of rules adopted, a number of gentlemen were nominated as office-bearers for the ensuing year.

The objects of this Society, as set forth in the Rules, are—co-operation in endeavours to extend the kingdom of God on earth; the spiritual and intellectual advancement of the members of the Association; the manifestation of Christian sympathy towards strangers of our deno-

mination coming to reside in Belfast; the cultivation of a more intimate acquaintance among the members. These objects it is proposed to carry out by the reading of papers on religious, literary and scientific subjects; remarks by members or visitors on the papers thus read; the formation of classes for the improvement of the members in branches of knowledge which any considerable number of them may be desirous of studying; the delivery of public or private lectures by persons of eminence invited by the Committee; a reading-room open to all the members.

The Society will be glad to receive through their Secretary, Mr. W. H. Greer, 31, High Street, any communication or suggestion relative to the objects in view.

---

BRITISH AND FOREIGN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

The thirty-third anniversary of this important Society was held on Wednesday, May 26th. The religious service and the business meeting were held in the chapel of Little Portland Street, where a numerous and highly respectable congregation assembled. Among the gentlemen present we noticed Mr. Herbert New, of Evesham, Mr. Jared Sparks, of Boston, Mr. George Long, Mr. E. Bicknell, Mr. John Watson, Dr. Bateman, Mr. James Yates, Mr. Chas. Paget, M.P., Mr. James Heywood, Mr. Robt. Henderson, Mr. Alderman Lawrence (Sheriff), Mr. J. C. Lawrence, Mr. Thomas Avison, of Liverpool, Mr. Munns, Mr. Wellings, Mr. Smale, Mr. James Silver, Mr. William Shakespeare, Mr. J. A. Yates, Mr. Olding, Mr. R. Montgomery. The ministers present were Revds. W. H. Channing, James Martineau, J. Scott Porter, Thomas Madge, Edward Tagart, Thos. L. Marshall, R. Brook Aspland, J. J. Tayler, Benjamin Carpenter, R. L. Carpenter, D. Davis, E. Kell, R. Shelley, Thomas Bowring, H. Hutton, Chas. Berry, W. Worsley, H. Alexander, J. L. Short, — Broom, A. Lunn, Geo. Kenrick, E. Chapman, Wm. Forster, Dr. Sadler, T. Rix, J. A. Briggs, Thomas Briggs, Henry Solly, James Humphreys, J. C. Means, A. Macdonald, L. Lewis, H. W. Crosskey, R. Shaen, H. Ierson, W. O. Squier, W. C. Squier and others.

The devotional service was conducted by Rev. James Martineau, and was characterized by solemnity and beauty rarely surpassed. The Scripture read was 1 Cor. ii. The sermon, by Rev. W. H. Channing, had for its texts Matt. xiii. 31, 32, 1 Cor. xii. 4, and Ephes. iv. 14. The variety of important and solemn themes handled in it was so great, and the beauty of some passages so striking, that we should do great injustice to the preacher were we to attempt to give an analysis of it, and must content ourselves with referring to the remarks of those who afterwards spoke of its merits in behalf of the assembled congregation. At the close of his sermon, the preacher made an appeal in behalf of the Association, the funds of which greatly need liberal help. A collection was made.

At the conclusion of the service, the chair was taken by Mr. Herbert New, the Mayor of Evesham. At his call, the Rev. T. L. Marshall, one of the Hon. Secretaries, read the report of the Committee, in drawing up which he said they were greatly indebted to the able assistance of Mr. Webb.

The report began with a reference to the pecuniary help rendered through the Association to various Unitarian objects, and expression was given to regret that a larger amount was not available for their promotion. A donation was acknowledged of £10 from Captain Mercer, now with his regiment in India. Miss Gifford, sister of the late Admiral Gifford, whose death is lamented by all who knew her, has bequeathed the residue of her property in reversion of two lives to the Association. Notice was taken also of the fact that the late Arthur Henry Johnson, Esq., bequeathed to the Society £500 on the reversion of two lives. A suggestion was thrown out whether the basis of the Institution might not be enlarged, by the appointment of a President and Vice-President, by obtaining for the Association the right of holding property in its own name, and by other alterations of the Constitution. The publication of the *Unitarian Pulpit* has been attended with satisfactory results, having attained a considerable and remunerative circulation. Its catholicity as respects the Unitarian body was alluded to. The fund in the course of being raised for the protection of our Transylvanian colleges amounts to £1143. 15*s.* 2*d.* The collection intended amongst the American Unitarians has been postponed, in consequence of the monetary difficulties of the country. It will be attended to in the course of the year, and little doubt is entertained that the whole amount required, £2000, will be raised. The meeting of the Association intended to be held at Manchester, had by the advice of friends been postponed from the autumn of last year, and had not taken place, as was at one time contemplated, in the spring of the present year, in consequence of the general state of the country and its financial embarrassments. It is hoped that, by postponing the meeting again until the autumn, a large and successful gathering may be secured, and the interests of the

Association proportionably benefited. The Revised Version of the Old-Testament Scriptures is reported to be in progress. The portion actually printed includes the Pentateuch, and it is expected that the first volume, which will include the Book of Judges, will be ready for publication in the autumn. Reference is then made to the efforts made to restore the British and Foreign School Society to its original and legitimate objects, and expression is given to the belief that good effects have arisen from the attempts of Unitarians to preserve the proper character of the Institution, and that the efforts of the late Mr. Wood and Mr. Armstrong were bearing useful though tardy fruits. Allusion is next made to the useful and zealous exertions of the London District Unitarian Society. The report then referred with congratulation to the completion of the very handsome new Unitarian chapel at Hackney, and to the intended removal of Rev. R. Brook Aspland to Hackney. He will be proposed as a member of the Committee of the Association. Reference is then made to the Unitarian services now regularly carried on at Stamford Street under the ministry of Rev. T. L. Marshall; also to the new Unitarian churches opened during the past year at Trowbridge, Swinton, Stratford, Essex, Idle, near Leeds, and to the re-opening of the chapel and revival of the cause at Hinckley, in Leicestershire.—In respect to foreign affairs, the report alluded in encouraging and hopeful terms to the ministry undertaken at Melbourne by Rev. Henry Higginson. An interesting letter from Rev. J. C. Woods details the healthy and vigorous action of Unitarianism in Adelaide. Of our Indian missions, nothing special is recorded; but it is hoped that the rebellion has not exercised any mischievous influence on the schools and chapel at Madras, conducted by Mr. Roberts. At Calcutta, Mr. H. A. Dall continues his mission. The Committee are in communication with Mr. Hodgson Pratt, who has given important information respecting the mission. Allusion is made to the recent troubles in India, and the hope is expressed that our rulers may be guided to a policy both just and humane, calculated to develop the resources and to promote the lasting prosperity of our Indian empire.—By means of the Book and Tract department of the Association, valuable help has been given in many places, both in town and country, where Unitarian lectures have been delivered. The issue of books and tracts during the year has amounted to 18,272, representing a money value of £322. 14*s.* 7*d.* The report then refers to the case of Newbury, where the legal proceedings have been protracted to the present time, greatly to the inconvenience and loss of the congregation. But the difficulties hitherto experienced are virtually at an end, and there is ground for hope that the prosperity of the congregation will now go on without further check. Rev. R. Shelley reports that the principle of non-subscription has been preserved. Great expenses have been the result of the legal contest, and it is hoped that the Unitarian public will liberally assist the friends at Newbury. At Hinckley a very gratifying revival has taken place under the ministry of Rev. W. Newton. To this society a conditional grant of £20 has been made. To the congregation at Stratford £25 has been voted. In conclusion, the Committee allude to the very slight bond that at present exists between the Association and the various similar Institutions in the country. It is very incorrect to regard the Association as a mere London Institution. The Committee anxiously desire the hearty co-operation of all branches of the Unitarian church, and will be happy to receive communications and suggestions from friends in the country that may be conducive to the development and establishment of those religious views which Unitarians hold and value in common.

The Treasurer's report was then read, shewing an expenditure during the year of £1012, and a balance in hand of £40. The subscriptions have amounted to £512. 10*s.*, the sale of books to £105. 6*s.*, and the other sources of income, from dividends on stock, &c., have amounted to £434, making a total income for the year of £1052.

Rev. Edmund Kell expressed the great interest with which he had heard the report of the Committee. From its commencement, he feared it would prove of a lugubrious character, but he had been agreeably disappointed. He regretted the falling off in the funds of the Society. They must be recruited by the addition of new supporters to take the place of those who dropped off. Referring to the late Miss Gifford, who had testified the warm approval she felt when living towards the Association by leaving it the reversion of her property, he mentioned an instance of her earnestness in carrying out her convictions. When the nation was agitated by the struggle for the repeal of the Corn Laws, she thought that a petition from the ladies of England might be useful. Proceeding to Manchester, she organized it, and the result was a petition signed by upwards of a million females. He expressed his warm approval of the scheme for a new translation of the Old Testament. The

Unitarians might now be denounced by Dr. Cumming and persons of that class, but the time would come when their efforts to put forth a more faithful translation of the Scriptures would gain them the respect of all who loved Scripture truth. He moved with much pleasure, "That the reports of the Committee and Treasurer now read be approved, and printed and circulated as usual."

Rev. R. L. CARPENTER, in seconding the motion, said that this metropolitan Association had strong claims upon their support. By means of it, they became connected with foreign Societies and those of the colonies. He certainly wished something more definite had been reported by the Committee on the subject of the Indian mission. Of Mr. Dall he felt bound to say, from his own personal knowledge, that he was a man of the greatest energy of purpose, and that he was filling a post of extreme difficulty. On the subject of the British and Foreign School Society, he thought the course now being adopted by the friends in London the right one. Nevertheless he was well pleased that they had collected such a mass of important evidence while it could be recovered, manifesting the catholic and unsectarian purpose of the founders of the Society. He rejoiced to see the firm position taken by their friends—a difficult position to be held by a small minority. When a minority has a principle of enduring vitality, they must not allow themselves to be driven from it. Mere passing *crotchets* would come to nothing, but a strong principle would live. He thought it right to add, that in many parts of the country Unitarian ministers found themselves happily able to act with others in the support of British schools.

Rev. J. Scott PORTER expressed the hope that next year the report would give a more decided and favourable account of the Calcutta mission under Mr. Dall. Of that gentleman's proceedings he had from various independent sources considerable knowledge, and he could not but regret the somewhat timid and cool language of the report in respect to the mission in India. The evidence in existence derogatory to Mr. Dall ought to be received with considerable allowance. Mr. Dall might take a more hopeful view than others—a too hopeful view—of the prospects of his mission; but nothing could, he was informed, surpass the earnestness with which he was carrying on his work, up early and late, conversing with all who sought his counsel and instruction in religious matters. In the performance of his duties he had not hesitated to expose himself to danger in some of the disturbed districts. He had succeeded in drawing together a congregation of Unitarian worshipers, consisting in about equal numbers of Europeans and Hindoos. The lectures he gave to his little flock had been printed. Some of them he (Mr. Porter) had read and greatly approved. He was bound to say he looked with great confidence and hope on the exertions of Mr. Dall.

Rev. H. W. CROSSKEY, of Glasgow, said he had the means of confirming all that Mr. Porter had stated. Of all the missionaries residing in Calcutta, Mr. Dall, he believed, enjoyed the largest share of the confidence of the natives. If he had erred in the estimate of his work and its results, it was the error of a prophet.

Rev. EDWARD TAGART expressed the obligations of the Committee to the gentlemen who had kindly tendered them their testimony and information. He was personally disposed to coincide with the hopeful remarks of his friends, but, with conflicting evidence before them, he thought the Committee had decided rightly in exercising caution and reserve. He should very much regret if any expressions in the report gave Mr. Dall pain. The conversation that had taken place shewed the advantages sometimes secured by the presence of gentlemen from different parts of the country, possessing information not within the reach of the Committee.—The resolution was passed unanimously.

Rev. Dr. SADLER then moved, "That the very cordial thanks of this meeting be presented to Rev. William Henry Channing for his eloquent and valuable discourse." Twenty years ago the then conductors of the Association meditated inviting the late Dr. Channing to come over to England to preach the anniversary sermon. The accomplishment of the scheme was prevented first by the tidings of the ill health, and afterwards by the death, of that illustrious man. They had, however, that day enjoyed the pleasure of hearing a beloved nephew of his. It had been a great privilege to them to have Mr. Channing resident as a minister in this country,—an advantage which he hoped would be long continued to the English Unitarian church. With respect to the sermon to which they had listened with so much admiration, he felt little disposed to become a critic, even in pointing out its beauties. It was characterized by the comprehensiveness and intensity which belonged to Mr. Channing. The discourse was felt by all who heard it to have a charm and a power. He concluded by tendering to Mr. Channing a hearty welcome.

Rev. J. J. TAYLER, in seconding the re-

solution, expressed his entire concurrence in the remarks of the mover. The discourse was calculated to rouse Unitarians to a sense of their pressing duties. He had never heard a sermon on such an occasion better fitted to supply a want of the times, and to draw the hearts of all hearers to the central love of God which the life of Christ is calculated to inspire.

The CHAIRMAN having in the name of the meeting tendered its thanks to Mr. CHANNING, he said that the cordial words spoken had stirred his spirit very deeply. It had been with great satisfaction he had stayed several years in England. The better he knew them, the more hearty had been his sympathy with them. He thought the Unitarians of England were somewhat too modest and too diffident respecting their own influence. They were afraid of blowing their own trumpet, although they had much to tell which the nations needed to hear. For the great and hospitable kindness he had received in England, he was personally very grateful, and the feeling extended, as he knew by letters he received, to many friends in the New World.

Rev. B. CARPENTER moved, and Mr. JOHN WATSON seconded, a motion, "That the best thanks of this meeting be presented to the Treasurer, Hon. Secretaries, Committee, Auditors and Local Treasurers, for their very valuable and important services in conducting the business of the Association during the past year; and that the following gentlemen be requested to undertake the duties of the following offices for the ensuing year: Treasurer—Algernon Sydney Aspland, Esq.; Joint Hon. Secretaries—Rev. Edward Tagart, F.G.S., and Rev. Thomas L. Marshall; Committee—Rev. R. Brook Aspland, Rev. G. Kenrick, Rev. Thos. Madge, Rev. Hugh Hutton, John E. Clennell, Esq., G. Stodart, Esq., J. T. Hart, Esq., A. Lawrence, Esq., David Martineau, Esq.; Auditors—E. Bicknell, Esq., E. F. Teschemacher, Esq.; N. Ainger, Esq. Jun."

The resolution having been adopted, Rev. HENRY SOLLY moved a resolution in accordance with the suggestion contained in the report, that it would be well to have a President and Vice-President; he also wished to add to this—which so far had, he believed, the sanction of the Committee—a resolution authorizing the Local Treasurers to sit on the Committee whenever convenient to them to do so. Such an extension of the constitution of the Society, would, he thought, infuse new vitality into it, and would remove the apathy and unacquaintedness of their country friends.

A long conversation ensued, in which the following gentlemen took part: Rev. Geo. Kenrick, Mr. Pinnock, Rev. T. L. Marshall, Mr. Jas. Heywood, Rev. Edwin Chapman, Mr. R. K. Montgomery, Mr. J. C. Lawrence, Rev. Edward Tagart, Mr. Smale, Rev. J. Scott Porter. Many practical objections were suggested to Mr. Solly's plan, and ultimately it was withdrawn, and a resolution was proposed in its stead, which, being seconded, was unanimously adopted—"That it be a recommendation to the Committee to consider the best means of obtaining a fuller representation of the opinions of friends of the Association residing in the country."

Mr. R. K. MONTGOMERY moved, and Rev. T. L. MARSHALL seconded, a motion, "That the best thanks of this meeting be given to those ministers who have given their assistance to the Committee in carrying out the plan of the *Unitarian Pulpit*."

Mr. JAMES HEYWOOD then moved the following resolution: "That this meeting views with deep anxiety the state and prospects of the British empire in the East Indies, and would impress it on the authorities that, in any plans for the promotion of Christianity in India, a strict regard be paid to the natural rights and religious liberties of the native population; that the diffusion of the knowledge of the Christian faith be trusted to voluntary efforts, and to the sure though indirect influence of general intelligence, and of a just, humane and considerate policy." He said that it gave him great pleasure to learn that their active missionary in Madras had met with considerable success. He believed that the Government had made a great mistake in not sufficiently trusting the natives. The sepoys had too, he had been informed, been outraged by the introduction into the native regiments of the European mode of punishment, so abhorrent to the feelings, of flogging.

Rev. EDWIN CHAPMAN seconded the resolution, which was carried.

Rev. J. SCOTT PORTER then moved, and Rev. W. A. JONES seconded, the next resolution: "That this meeting would express its deep sympathy with the noble efforts made by the Transylvanian Unitarians for the independence of their religious and educational institutions as a worshiping Christian community, and trusts that, under the Divine blessing, those institutions may be instrumental in the steady and gradual diffusion of an enlightened and civilizing religious faith in the east of Europe."

As the hour for the close of the business meeting had now arrived, it terminated with a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

A large portion of the assembly then adjourned to the spacious Music Hall in Store Street, which was well filled with a company, of which about one-half were ladies. Mr. HERBERT NEW again occupied the chair. Several hours were spent very delightfully in listening to a series of addresses on various topics. The speeches were of a very high order of merit, but we must refer our readers for them to the columns of our excellent contemporary, the *Inquirer*. The state of our own pages and the advanced period of the month will only permit us to give a very slight list of the speakers and toasts.—After the introductory loyal toast, Rev. J. J. TAYLER proposed, in a brief but effective address, full of good catholic feeling, "The cause of Civil and Religious Liberty—may the true principles of Freedom be ere long recognized and acted upon all the world over!"

Rev. R. BROOK ASPLAND proposed, "The British and Foreign Unitarian Association, and may its means of usefulness be extended year by year!" To this Rev. EDWARD TAGART replied in an able speech, explaining and vindicating the operations of the Society, and detailing some of the prospects of Unitarianism. In conclusion he proposed the following toast: "The Preacher of the day, the Rev. W. H. Channing; and the Supporter, the Rev. James Martineau."

Rev. W. H. CHANNING replied in a speech of varied wit and eloquence, and was repeatedly applauded.

Rev. JAMES MARTINEAU, in a speech of the highest merit, closing with a peroration of great beauty, expressed his continued and revived interest in the Association, and his warm sympathy with its leading objects. The whole of Mr. Martineau's address was listened to with profound attention, and again and again elicited the cheers of the audience.

Mr. C. PAGET, M.P., then proposed in handsome terms a resolution acknowledging the services of the Chairman. In replying, Mr. HERBERT NEW gave a very thoughtful and interesting address on the position occupied by Unitarian churches in the provinces, and the good they were effecting; and took a review of the obstacles to Unitarian success, and the valuable aid in overcoming them afforded by gatherings like that over which he presided.

Rev. J. SCOTT PORTER spoke with great feeling and power in acknowledgment of a toast in relation to the Unitarians of Ireland.

Mr. Alderman LAWRENCE proposed a toast on the great subject of Education.

Rev. H. W. CROSSKEY acknowledged, in a speech of great fervency and beauty, a toast relating to our brethren in Scotland. Then, at the call of Rev. E. Tagart, Rev. CHARLES BERRY closed the proceedings of the day with a short prayer and benediction.

The old and warm friends of the Unitarian Association separated with the interchange of congratulations, having reference not merely to the high intellectual pleasures enjoyed during the evening, but still more to the cordial union and sympathy which had been manifested in the course of the day by gentlemen supposed to represent all the varieties of thought and sentiment in the Unitarian church.

---

SUNDAY-SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

The twenty-fifth anniversary of this Society was held on Thursday, May 27th, at Radley's Hotel. Between one and two hundred friends assembled for breakfast. Amongst those present we observed Mr. J. C. Lawrence, Messrs. Edward and Henry Enfield, Mr. Wade, Mr. Herbert New, Revds. W. H. Channing, Jas. Martineau, J. J. Tayler, T. L. Marshall, J. L. Short, E. Kell, George Kenrick, and a very large proportion of the ministers whose names are given in the report of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. The chair having been taken by Rev. W. H. CHANNING, he said it gave him great pleasure to be present at that meeting, for no one could observe the tendency of the Christian world without being convinced that in the young are the chief objects of hope, and that the Sunday-school is the great instrumentality for realizing that hope. The duty devolves especially on the Protestant Church. The Catholic Church adapts itself to the wants of the young in a way which the Protestant Church does not, unless the Sunday-school comes in to aid the efforts of the minister. Infanticide is a hideous thing; but moral and spiritual infanticide, education without spiritual cultivation, is still more so. Charles Julius Hare said, that unless flowers were born in the spring, we could look for no fruit in autumn. He did not think that no goodness would grow out of the heart of destitute children; sometimes, though the spring-time comes late, yet it is a sudden outbreak of all that is most holy and most humane. Religious education was the most important of all. The more the Sunday-school is devoted to religious education simply and purely, the more truly it fulfils its function. When the Sunday-school first arose, there was a great want of primary schools, and there was a need of general knowledge being taught in the

Sunday-school. But now that education was diffused, the Sunday-school could more strictly apply its powers to its proper work. Our Sunday-schools aim to bring the souls of the young into personal communion with the Church, with God, and with Christ and Heaven. Mr. Channing then illustrated the power of religion by a striking anecdote of a poor girl suffering from cancer, shut up for months in a darkened room, and receiving the consolatory visits of a lady with expressions of ardent gratitude to God. It was a lamentable mistake to suppose, as some people seemed to do, that secular knowledge was chiefly important and real. If religious knowledge and influence were not real, then what was real? The Chairman, after some other introductory observations, called on Mr. I. M. Wade, the Secretary, to read the Committee's report.

The report, after some introductory remarks, alluded to the great loss sustained by the Society through the serious illness of Mr. Vidler, the late efficient Secretary. It next noticed the recent mission of Rev. Henry Solly, who had visited during six months 105 schools, and who had executed his important trust entirely to their satisfaction. So acceptable had his visit proved, that the question had arisen whether it might not be well to appoint a permanent missionary to keep up the work of visiting the schools. He might do much in strengthening the hands of the teachers, and enlisting the hearty sympathy of ministers and congregations, and infusing new life into the schools. But where is the man? where the means? On the subject of the necessity of a short Liturgy for Sunday scholars, opinions are invited. At Glasgow and other places, such liturgies are in use with advantageous results.

The 1st question discussed between Mr. Solly and the teachers he met was this—*Have your teachers meetings for religious improvement or business, and how often?* In reply to 270 circulars, 180 answers have been received. It appears that there are 36 chapels without any Sunday-school; 47 schools have less than 50 children each, 43 have from 50 to 100 children, and 66 with 100 and upwards; one of the schools (Mossley) exceeding 1000. The total number of children on the books is 17,863; of teachers, 2970.—In reply to the first question, it appears that while periodical business meetings prevail, regular meetings amongst the teachers for religious improvement are very rare. Some of the returns lament this. Where the fire of religious life burns low, the school will be either very secular in its character or dwarfed in its results.

The 2nd and 3rd questions were, *Have any of your elder scholars become teachers or joined the congregation during the last twelve months?* In reply it is stated that about 300 scholars have become teachers, and about 200, not becoming teachers, have joined the congregation.

The 4th question was, *Have any of your children in the school at the time, been convicted of crime during the last twelve months?* Out of 17,000 children, the Committee are informed only three have been convicted of crime during the year. "When, therefore, they remember the startling assertions as to the number of children previously attending Sunday-schools that annually found their way into jails and reformatories, your Committee cannot but feel they have good ground for the belief they have always held, that this sweeping assertion should have been modified by very large qualifications."

The 5th question was, *What is the most pressing want of your school, and can the Association do anything to meet that want?* In reply, some say, "Books;" "Books offering a greater variety than those published by the Association;" "Books of a more decided religious tendency;" "Books for the younger classes;" "More teachers;" "More scholars;" "More zealous and devoted teachers;" "Better educated teachers;" "More earnest religious life;" "More active interest on the part of minister and congregation." Other replies say they want funds, new school-rooms and increased classrooms. Few seem sanguine that the Association can do much to help them in these wants, and some of them candidly say so.

The 6th question was, *Add any other remarks as to the state of your school, or that may conduce to the more efficient working of the Association.* Various answers are given, such as, "Send us another missionary like Mr. Solly;" "Appoint a permanent missionary;" "Give us cheap, suitable, and a greater variety of books;" "Hold meetings of the Association occasionally in the provinces."

During the year, grants have been made to the schools at Astley Street, Dukinfield, Bristol Domestic Mission, Doncaster, Gt. Hucklow, Macclesfield (new school), Selby, St. Clears, Southampton, Saffron Walden, Sunderland, Stratford (Essex), and Thorne (Yorkshire). The Society has during the past year published the "Elder Scholars' Class Book" and the "Sunday-School Reader," designed to meet the want of books for the advanced classes, and which have been favourably received by the public. There have been reprinted, Mr.

Vidler's "Second Book," Miss Lettis's "Catechism of the Life of Christ," and Greenwood's "Short Services for Children."

A Certificate of Merit for elder scholars has been presented to the Committee by Mr. T. C. Clarke, of a very handsome design. It is published at a moderate price.

The Christian Tract Society has offered to transfer their remaining stock of books to this Association, on the condition that it also undertakes the liabilities. The stock amounts to £300, after deducting 75 per cent. from the published prices; the liabilities of the Society amount to £78. 8*s*. The Committee are disposed to recommend the acceptance of this offer. The report then alludes to the attendance of the delegates, and gives them a cordial welcome to the meeting.

On the subject of finance, the needs of the Society are great: in consequence of Mr. Solly's mission, the expenses have been unusually heavy, and there is need of a large measure of liberal effort on the part of the public. The report concluded with an earnest recommendation to teachers to devote themselves to their work with increased zeal, and to prepare themselves for it by habitual and deep personal piety.

The Treasurer's report was next read. The annual subscriptions amounted to £55; donations to £90; the other sources of income amounted to £31; making a total income for the year of £180. The expenses of the year have amounted to £200. And the balance due to the Treasurer is about £21. The property in the depository is valued at about £350.

Mr. Solly read an abstract of his report of his mission; but as we intend to notice this in a future No. of the *Christian Reformer*, we do not now dwell upon it.

It is with regret we find ourselves precluded from giving anything like a full report of the very interesting speeches that followed, which were listened to with marked interest.

Mr. Enfield dwelt on the necessity of increasing the direct *religious* influence of our schools, and on the mode in which this object might be secured. He recommended attention to portions of the orthodox Sunday-school literature, and thought it might be worth while to appoint a Committee to examine in a large and catholic spirit the works published by the friends of Sunday-school education in other religious bodies, and to report to what extent we might profitably avail ourselves of their labours.

Rev. James Martineau, in moving the acceptance of the reports, shewed how in Protestant communions the School had always stood in close connection with the Church. It became Unitarians, occupying the vanguard of Protestantism, to prove their right to the position by their strong attachment to the School, and to rivet the connection between it and the Church. He illustrated from his own personal experience the obligations which ministers owe to the Sunday-school. He checked unreasonable expectations of what the minister could personally do in the Sunday-school. His functions should be to the teachers, and the teachers again should be, as it were, the pastors of their scholars. To realize this theory, the same teacher should week by week have the oversight of the same class. He dissuaded his friends from attempting to draw too strict a line of separation between secular and strictly religious teaching. All secular knowledge might have religious influences stamped upon them. He had no great confidence in the success of attempts to give religious instruction through set forms of words. Religion is not knowledge; it is a spirit. It must first dwell in the teacher's mind and heart, if it is to be transferred to those of his scholars. He shewed, by contrasting some of the circumstances of the middle classes with those of the poor, the importance of the work to be done in our Sunday-schools. In the middle classes, all the influences of home tend to foster religion and give exercise to its powers; but with the lower classes it was not always so, and the work done in the home of the one class had to be done for the other in the Sunday-school. He traced the advantages conferred on the congregation by the Sunday-school in giving them access to the homes and hearts of the poor. Parents might be got at and converted through their children. To the teacher himself, the discipline of teaching was invaluable. If he can only persuade himself to enter into the soul of the child, it can seldom be without the feeling that he rises by the very effort above his own level, and learns to comprehend that the kingdom of heaven is as the heart of a little child. Such teachings refresh the spirit and counteract the hard and selfish influences of our experience of life. The true Sunday-school teacher receives as much good as he gives. Mr. Martineau concluded his very instructive and delightful address by shewing what Sunday-school teaching, rightfully conducted, would effect in promoting vital and experimental religion in society, and exhorted his friends to exemplify by their practice the parting legacy of their Lord, "Feed my lambs."—Rev. D. Davis seconded the resolution.

Rev. J. J. Tayler, in moving the appointment of the Society's officers, expressed a wish that the Association should combine with the Society established in Manchester in the production of the required Sunday-school literature.

Rev. W. A. Jones seconded the resolution. In putting it, the Chairman expressed his great appreciation of Mr. Solly's report, and suggested to the Committee that they would do well to print it entire, and place it before all the Sunday-schools in the country with which they were connected.

Rev. J. L. Short moved a resolution authorizing the Committee to accept the stock of the Christian Tract Society on the liberal terms proposed, and to incorporate it with the other books in their depository. In common with many who deplored the extinction of the Tract Society, he rejoiced that its admirable books would be again made accessible to the public, and through the channel of this stock he anticipated some accessions of influence and means to the Association itself.

Rev. H. W. Crosskey, of Glasgow, seconded the resolution in a very eloquent speech.—The resolution was unanimously adopted.

Rev. J. C. Means paid a feeling tribute to the merits of Mr. Vidler, their former Secretary, and proposed a resolution expressive of the feelings of gratitude for past services and sympathy with his present privations.

Mr. J. C. Lawrence, as one of the Committee, seconded this well-earned tribute of respect.

The Chairman then introduced to the meeting the gentlemen who were present as delegates from other bodies. Rev. Benj. Carpenter appeared and spoke as the representative of the Midland Sunday-School Association. Mr. Jeffrey Worthington appeared as the delegate of the Manchester Sunday-School Association, and gave a very animated and interesting speech. Rev. Henry Alexander, of Newry, appeared and briefly spoke as the delegate of the Sunday-School Association of the North of Ireland; and Rev. W. C. Squier spoke as a delegate from the Sunday-school at Preston. At the close of these proceedings, which lasted till after one o'clock, it was suggested that the time had passed for carrying into effect the proposed conference of teachers; but as some of the meeting seemed unwilling to give up the opportunity of interchanging sentiments and information on the important topics set down for discussion, the Chairman continued to occupy his post for another hour. The subjects proposed for conference were—1. In what way can the Association best meet the wants of our Sunday-schools? 2. In what position do our schools stand in relation to our congregations? Rev. — Briggs, of Dover, Rev. Henry Solly, Rev. T. Broom, Rev. W. C. Squier, Mr. J. C. Lawrence, Rev. R. Shaen, Mr. Wade and others took part in the conference. It was, however, somewhat desultory, and led to no practical results that we can report. Expression was again given, and very strongly, to the merits of Mr. Solly's entire report, and a donation was offered towards the expense of reprinting it. In accordance with the hint thrown out by the Chairman, the subject was referred to the consideration of the Committee. In conclusion, we desire to express the hope that the hands of the Committee will be during the coming year strengthened by the pecuniary liberality of the public, that they may effectually carry out the means of useful action so plainly within their reach.

---

### LONDON DISTRICT UNITARIAN SOCIETY.

After the close of the interesting but protracted proceedings of the Sunday-School Association on Thursday, May 27, the ministers present adjourned to dinner at Anderton's Hotel, Fleet Street, under the presidency of Rev. John James Tayler. After the discussion of some topics of especial interest to the members of the ministerial body, and of others affecting the welfare of their congregations, the ministers present (about twenty in number) adjourned to Radley's Hotel, Blackfriars, to meet their friends, the members of the Unitarian District Association. A very numerous assemblage of ladies and gentlemen was there gathered together to celebrate their entrance on the eighth year of the operations of the Society. The chair was taken by Mr. James Yates, the President, who opened the proceedings by a distinct statement of the objects they had in view. Unlike the Unitarian Association, the scope of which included not only the whole of Great Britain, but our distant colonies and all parts of the world where Unitarianism was known or could be planted, the Society whose anniversary meeting was now being held aimed at a more local and limited action, and was established with the single object of promoting Unitarianism and increasing the union of its professors in the metropolis. After a brief sketch of the rise and growth of Unitarian views of Christian truth, and of the means taken in later times to propagate them, Mr. Yates touched upon the much-agitated question of the propriety of using a creed, and concluded with ex-

pressing his approbation of the catholic feeling of modern Unitarians, which welcomed into their ranks all the worshipers of the one true God, the Father of Jesus Christ, whatever might be their opinions on minor points of Christian doctrine.

Mr. E. Bicknell, the Treasurer, read a report on the financial condition of the Society, which shewed that the receipts of the past year had amounted to about £155, of which £125 were in the form of subscriptions, and £30 of donations. The expenditure during the past year had slightly exceeded the income, so that the deficiency announced at the last anniversary of nearly £36, still pressed upon the Society.

Mr. J. C. Lawrence, one of the Secretaries, then read the report of the Committee,—a document so excellent in sentiment and vigorous in expression, that we regret we cannot now transfer it word for word to our pages. After a forcible explanation of the objects contemplated by the Society, it was argued that its spirit was not exclusive or dogmatic, and that if it clung to the *Unitarian* name, it was because it was regarded as necessary to the consistent assertion of scriptural truth. The attention of the Committee had been drawn to the fact that many young people, members of Unitarian families in the provinces, on coming to London failed to connect themselves with Unitarian societies. To remedy this evil, a circular had been sent to the Unitarian ministers throughout the country, inviting them to give to members of their flocks about to remove to the metropolis an introduction to some London minister, or to some one of the officers of this Society. Believing also that a list of the various chapels in and about the metropolis, stating the times of services and particulars of schools and all connected institutions, would be useful to the resident as well as to the stranger visiting London, they had in October of last year issued "The London Unitarian Register," giving various particulars respecting the sixteen places of worship in the metropolitan district where Holy Scripture is the only rule of faith, and difference of opinion is no bar to Christian communion. The report then alluded to the subjects discussed and the results arrived at by the social meetings held from time to time under the direction of the Society; also to the several courses of lectures delivered at Stratford, Southwark and Mortimer Street, in explanation and defence of Unitarian Christianity; to the opening of the new chapel at Stratford by Rev. Mr. Rix; and to the Library which belonged to the District Unitarian Society, containing many valuable books, the use of which could be easily obtained by those desirous of reading them, and of which the Committee would be pleased to see a larger use made. Due acknowledgments were made to the Unitarian Association for co-operation by the grant of tracts in aid of the lectures undertaken by the Society. The Committee regret that notwithstanding the liberality of some friends at their last meeting, the balance against the Society remains what it then was. They were conscious that they had used the strictest economy in the use of the funds placed at their disposal. Without an increase of pecuniary resources, the usefulness of the Society must be contracted. The report concluded with an eloquent statement of the grounds for satisfaction and hope which the friends of Unitarian Christianity might cherish when they looked at the signs of the times.

The Chairman expressed the perfect satisfaction which the report gave him, and characterized it as a most able, animating and admirable document.

In moving the adoption of the report, Rev. T. L. Marshall dwelt on the broad and catholic spirit of the Society. It aimed to include all the sincere worshipers of the One God, through the Lord Jesus Christ, without reference to their individual opinions on minor points. The proceedings of the week had been eminently healing and satisfactory. They shewed that there existed in the minds of all their friends a much larger degree of unanimity than had been supposed. For himself, he would take the opportunity of saying that he exceedingly regretted if he had at any time uttered anything which indicated distrust of any party or of any individual amongst them. The events of the last two or three years had removed his apprehensions and widened his views. Most beneficial would be the Society if it helped to bring together the different friends of their common faith, of every section and school of thought, disabused their minds of mutual prejudices, and taught them the wide ground which existed for sympathy and cordial co-operation.—Rev. H. Ierson seconded the resolution.

Rev. R. B. Aspland moved, and Rev. W. A. Jones seconded, this resolution: "That this meeting, recognizing the necessity for continued exertions on the part of the friends of Free Inquiry and Liberal Christianity in behalf of the great principles they profess to hold dear, desires to commend the London District Unitarian Society to their warm sympathy and generous support."

Rev. Thomas Madge said that the meeting of the previous evening must have

given to all present great satisfaction. It was well known that during the past year occurrences had taken place which seemed at one time to threaten a lasting division among their friends. Happily, that fear had now passed away. Mr. Madge then alluded to the able and very interesting address which his friend Mr. Martineau had delivered at the meeting in Store Street. Its kindness of manner and its conciliatory tone had his perfect sympathy; so much so, that though some things had been said with which he did not entirely agree, he thought it better to be on that occasion silent than to appear to disturb a harmony which all seemed to appreciate. But on the present occasion, he felt assured he might, without any disturbance of the kindly feeling which happily prevailed, introduce one or two remarks by way of qualification of the sentiments to which they had listened. Mr. Madge then proceeded to shew the necessity there was for the utterance of distinct Unitarian convictions; and that where people met for the solemn purpose of worshiping God, there must be a mutual agreement amongst the worshipers as to the Object of that worship. He would have the principles which bound together a religious society few in number, and would not tie them up in any strict formal creed; but principles there must be. He did not think that free inquiry (greatly as he valued it) was the foundation-principle, though it was one of the conditions, of the Unitarian denomination.

Rev. James Martineau, as a guest, not a member, of the Society, then offered an explanation of his views, which the remarks of his friend Mr. Madge shewed him was needed. He objected to no man's uttering, with unlimited freedom, his own individual convictions. It was demanded from every sincere and earnest man. He himself had in his past history not refrained from public utterances of his individual convictions. When Unitarian Christianity was openly attacked in Liverpool, he as openly took his share in defending it. If he were placed again in similar circumstances, he would repeat the course he then took. What he argued for was the non-interference with the foundation-principle of their older societies, which was a principle of doctrinal freedom, in the exercise of which congregations had become first Arian and then Unitarian. More recently-formed societies had not this general and unlimited basis, but were more distinctly Unitarian. He objected not to this in those who approved of the course, though of the two principles he should prefer the former.

Amid hearty cheers, Mr. Madge expressed his satisfaction at having called forth the explanation from his much-valued friend. He rejoiced now to believe that there was little difference of opinion between them. He, equally with his friend, deprecated the insertion into the deeds of even Unitarian churches of doctrinal qualifications and conditions. He would leave a future generation as free to seek and profess revealed truth, as he himself had been.

This interesting episode of the proceedings, interfering though it did with some of the intended duties of the evening, was felt by all present to be of an extremely important character, and in its result was hailed with warm satisfaction, as it was perceived that much mutual misunderstanding was cleared away, and the prospect opened of future cordial co-operation among the friends of liberal thought and Unitarian Christianity.

Rev. H. W. Crosskey delivered one of his enthusiastic addresses; the routine resolutions of the Society were then passed; and after a vote of thanks to the President for the able way in which he discharged the duties of his office, the meeting separated at a somewhat late hour.

---

### THE GENERAL BAPTIST ASSEMBLY.

The General Assembly of the General Baptist churches was held in Worship Street, London, on Whit-Tuesday, the 25th May. It was attended by friends from various of the churches connected with the Assembly. Among them were the Revds. H. E. Howse, of Reading (Chairman); John Briggs and Thomas B. W. Briggs, of Dover; J. A. Briggs, of Bessel's Green; W. H. Black, of Mill Yard, London; Jas. Humphreys, of Dockhead, London; John Marten, of Saffron Walden; S. Martin, of Trowbridge; J. C. Means, of Worship Street; T. Rix, of Stratford; and J. O. Squier, of Headcorn. The public service was introduced by Mr. J. B. Lloyde, of Manchester New College; the general prayer offered by Rev. S. Martin; and the sermon preached by Rev. J. C. Means, from Mark xvi. 15, 16. The preacher's object was to enforce the value of the ordinance as an appointed part of the discipline of a Christian life. The publication of the sermon was requested by the Assembly.

The business discussed was not of interest beyond the limits of the body, except that petitions to Parliament for the abolition of Church-rates and for the revision of the Authorized Version of the Scriptures were agreed to.

In the evening, a public social meeting was held, the Rev. S. Martin in the chair;

and addresses were delivered by Revds. T. Bowring, of Nantwich; W. C. Squier, of Preston; Richard Shelley, of Newbury; John Briggs; John L. Short, of Bridport; H. Solly, John Marten and J. C. Means. The proceedings of the day were closed with prayer by Rev. W. H. Black.

---

UNITARIANISM AT PADIHAM.

For some weeks past there has been considerable excitement in Padiham, arising out of the misunderstanding of a letter written by Dr. Beard to the Editor of the *Manchester Examiner and Times*. Because Dr. Beard had said Unitarians contended earnestly for the divinity of Jesus Christ, the church-people and many of the Dissenters eagerly caught at the words, and triumphantly announced that he had become a Trinitarian. It seems that for many years Dr. Beard has held a high position among the various sections of the religious community at Padiham. Unitarians were proud of him as the able advocate and defender of their holy truths, and Trinitarians stood in a wholesome dread of him, and always were careful to speak of him with respect. To the latter, therefore, the rapidly circulated statement that he had become a Trinitarian was most welcome; and, without waiting to make inquiry, public announcements were made in some of the Dissenting schools. To check the tide of triumph on the part of their opponents, the Unitarian friends wrote to Dr. Beard, and desired him to go down to them to deliver a lecture. Dr. Beard consented, and on Friday, 14th inst., he addressed a densely crowded audience in the Unitarian chapel on the "Divinity and Atonement of Jesus Christ." At the close of the lecture, which was listened to for nearly three hours with marked attention and approbation, an anonymous document was read, challenging the Doctor to meet in public discussion. Dr. Beard deprecated the want of courtesy manifested in forwarding an anonymous challenge, but observed that he should be glad to leave the matter in the hands of a committee of six persons, three Trinitarians and three Unitarians, and if the name of the challenger were forthcoming, he should be glad to come down to meet him. Several facts have transpired which serve to indicate pretty clearly who forwarded the challenge, but at present the gentleman has not acknowledged it. However, in the following week the curate of the Church, the Rev. J. Burger, B.A., announced a lecture to be delivered in the Town Hall, on the subject, "Are Unitarians Christians?" A great meeting took place, and the Rev. gentleman answered the question in the negative. His lecture occupied about three hours in delivery, and was listened to very attentively. At its close, Mr. Rushton, the senior student of the Home Missionary Board, who had been present during the lecture, rose and replied to several of the points of Mr. Burger's address, and concluded an admirable speech by announcing his intention of giving a full reply to the lecture, in the same Hall, on the following week. Public announcements were made accordingly, and on Tuesday evening, 25th inst., a crowded audience assembled to hear the reply. The Rev. J. Burger disappointed the expectations of the audience, and did not attend the meeting. Mr. Rushton in a masterly address enchained the attention of his audience, while he completely refuted the arguments of the Rev. gentleman. At the close of his address, an opportunity was afforded for any one to ask questions, or to come upon the platform to make any remarks: no one took advantage of the opportunity, and a unanimous and spontaneous vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Rushton for his lecture.

One or two features of the lectures are deserving notice. On the delivery of Mr. Burger's lecture, the chair was occupied by Mr. Thomas Holland, a Unitarian, and on the occasion of Mr. Rushton's reply, Mr. William Harrison, a Baptist, presided. Both meetings were of a very quiet and orderly character, and stood in marked contrast with the disgraceful scenes enacted at many such assemblies. All present seemed to feel the subjects discussed to be of great importance, and it was an interesting sight to observe how carefully the great majority of the audiences sought from their Bibles the passages mentioned by the lecturers, and how thoughtfully they listened to the remarks which followed.

On the whole, the discussion promises to lead to good results: the Unitarians are strengthened in their faith, while many Trinitarians have learned for the first time how much scriptural authority there is for the support of opinions which so-called orthodoxy has so loudly condemned.

J. C. S.

# OBITUARY.

## THE LATE MR. CHRISTIE.

At a time when the members of the Hackney Gravel-Pit congregation have been making such efforts in the erection of a new place of worship, and have inaugurated it under such happy auspices, it may not be uninteresting to some of the older members to call to mind the recollection of one who, in his days of vigour, when blessed with prosperity, was ever ready to aid with his purse, his time and his counsel, an institution to which he steadily adhered throughout the varied phases of his life. Nor should the rising generation, who enjoy the privileges of so greatly enlarged a freedom of opinion, fail to look back occasionally on the career of those "who have borne the heat and burden of the day," and to whose combined and persevering efforts we owe much of the liberality which characterizes legislative enactments of the present day.

Mr. CHRISTIE, the subject of the present memoir, was born in Stirling, in Scotland, on the 5th of November, 1775. His father, Mr. John Christie, merchant, of the same place, was much respected in the town, having filled at different times several honourable posts, such as Master of the Freemasons' Lodge, Dean of Guild, &c. His mother, Campbell M'Ara, was daughter of the Rev. John M'Ara, a Covenanter, who was called out by the Royalists to head a troop of horse against the Pretender, in the engagement at Falkirk, and who was so zealous for the Protestant cause, that he built at his own expense a kirk adjoining his house at Paisley, in which he officiated. He gave a superior education to his daughter, whom he instructed himself in Greek and Latin, and who, besides being a woman of considerable talent, was of a pious turn of mind, and was always spoken of by her family with the greatest respect and affectionate veneration. The letters which she wrote to her sons in London, when they were about to enter on the career of life and its struggles, were full of touching interest, evincing by her kind maternal warnings the greatest anxiety for their happiness and well-being.

Mr. Christie received his early education at the excellent endowed grammar-school of his native town, the celebrated Dr. Doig being at that time the head-master, and we well recollect having heard him descant on the classic scholarship of the Doctor, and the pains he took with his pupils, several of whom turned out distinguished men. It was, however, chiefly to his own assiduity and ardour for intellectual acquirements that he was indebted for the knowledge he gained in various branches of study; for being himself the eldest of seven children, he was compelled to leave school at an early age and bend his steps towards the metropolis. Here he accepted a situation in the mercantile house of Messrs. Coney, Wilson and Co., where his talents soon became appreciated and his character highly respected. Though his mother and sister worshiped with the Cameronians, he had always attended with his father and brothers the Established Church of Scotland, and this he continued to do when he came up to London, where Dr. Hunter was then minister to this body. To this gentleman he brought a letter of introduction, and generally spent the Sundays in his family, never failing to remit to his mother every week the text and heads of the discourse until her death, which occurred at the early age of 42. This was a severe blow for him: the parting when he left home at the age of fifteen had been a source of trial to the fond mother, who in the midst of her tears forgot not prayers for his welfare; it was now his turn to weep for her whom he was never more to meet. Most strictly attentive to his sabbath duties, he spent much of his leisure time during the evenings of the week in attending the debating societies so much frequented at the dawn of the French Revolution by young men more advanced in the freedom of political and religious opinions than their contemporaries. This exercise of the reasoning powers led him to much research on various subjects, but particularly religion; and his acquaintance with the works of those eminent divines, Price, Kippis, Priestley, Paley, &c., as well as his intimacy with that distinguished scholar, Gilbert Wakefield, whom he visited during his imprisonment, roused in his mind doubts as to the religious views he had hitherto held, eliciting from him a more thorough investigation of the Scriptures, the result of which was his decided conviction of the truth of Unitarian views of Christianity.

Before his mother's death, he had been engaged to a very amiable lady, Miss Shipley, of Leicester, then staying with her brother in town, and whose religious views were happily in strict accordance with his own, her family and relations being members of the Rev. Hugh Worthington's congregation. Upon his mar-

riage he resided in Great St. Helen's, and began business on his own account, greatly to the regret of his employers, though with their cordial good wishes for his success. His next move, to Homerton, where he lived directly opposite the Independent College, brought him into connection with the highly-esteemed members of the Old Gravel-Pit meeting-house, to which congregation he belonged during the rest of his life, and of which we believe at his decease he was the oldest member, having outlived a succession of its ministers, the one of whom, whose intimacy he enjoyed the longest, being his greatly-respected friend, the late Rev. Robert Aspland, who adorned for so many years the pulpit of the New Gravel-Pit chapel.

At this period of his life, Mr. Christie's time was unremittingly devoted to business; he toiled hard and late, often not returning to his country-house till night was far advanced. Success crowned his efforts; his commercial enterprizes prospered, and wealth flowed in upon him; he became a merchant of repute; and a younger brother joining him as partner, his business was carried on under the well-known firm of John and Robert Christie and Co., of Mark Lane. He had never relinquished the pursuit of knowledge in the midst of most engrossing cares; he now spared no expense in the education of his children; his library was constantly enriched by additions of the best works of the day on all subjects: here he spent his leisure hours in reading and acquiring knowledge after his return home of an evening; and he possessed so fine and retentive a memory, that nothing was lost to him which he had once read.

The stanch friend of civil and religious liberty, he was ever ready with his purse and his influence to aid in the efforts made for doing away with restrictive measures that weighed upon the conscience and were of an oppressive nature. From Homerton he removed to Hackney Wick, which latter residence he greatly enlarged and improved; and here were given those hospitable entertainments to the Unitarian body which brought together ministers from all parts of the United Kingdom, several of whom were invited to remain there during the week in which the anniversary of the Unitarian Fund took place, of which Association he was so zealous a friend and supporter, and to which he had served the office of Treasurer many years of his life. Nor must we forget the kind greeting and cordial welcome ever bestowed by his amiable wife on these occasions, nor her earnest interest in the promotion of the same cause.

Having amassed a very fine fortune, shortly after the peace, Mr. Christie purchased an estate in Breconshire, South Wales, which included several farms besides the Royal Forest bought of the Crown; there he carried on most extensive improvements, greatly to the benefit of the landowners around, one of whom, the late Marquis of Camden, said that he had increased the value of his land to the extent of a shilling an acre. With the wonderful energy so characteristic of him, he constructed at his own expense eighteen miles of railway, thus bringing lime and coal within reach of those farmers who had formerly to procure them at the sacrifice of great time and cost; and the good *he* effected, others reap the benefit of. For the same county he twice served the office of High Sheriff.

Unfortunately, his residing in London was against the interest of his property in Wales, whilst an estate requiring personal inspection at so great a distance was inimical to business interests in town. The panic throughout the country in 1825 involving the failure of many banks and commercial establishments, his house, unable to withstand the overwhelming difficulties of contending circumstances, succumbed to the pressure of this crisis. Throughout the remainder of his life, chequered as it was, he remained constant to his religious convictions, and was permitted to live to see the carrying out of those reforms, such as the removal of the Test and Corporation Act, Dissenters' Marriage Bill, Dissenters' Chapels Bill, Free Trade, &c., of which he had been so strenuous an advocate in his earlier days.

Mr. Christie possessed a remarkably strong constitution, and lived so regular a life, that when he had attained the age of sixty, none of his family could call to mind his ever having had a day's illness, with the exception of a very slight one occasioned by an accident. Since this period he had several attacks of paralysis, from the first of which he recovered sufficiently to resume an active life for several years, and to preside as Chairman at the British and Foreign Unitarian Association in the year 1847; and when obliged to give up active bodily exertion, he employed his whole time in reading, which he did without the aid of spectacles to the last. His fine physical powers had, however, for some years past been giving way, and he finally sank to rest on the 9th of February last, at the age of 83, when his remains were consigned to his family vault in the burial-ground belonging to the Gravel-Pit chapel.

Feb. 18, near New York, the Rev. JOHN FORREST, M.A., formerly Unitarian minister of Greenock, in Scotland. His remains were interred at Fairmont, a village about ten miles distant from New York. Can any of his friends in Great Britain give us any account of him in a future No. of the *Christian Reformer?*

---

April 3, at Whittington, near Chesterfield, aged 85 years, Mrs. MARY WICKSTEED, formerly of Wem and Chester. This estimable lady adorned, through a life more than ordinarily prolonged, the doctrine of her Saviour, by her gentle goodness and earnest desire of usefulness. At one period of her life, associated with a sister of kindred dispositions, she was a teacher of youth, and her pupils, many of whom have risen to fill highly respectable stations in life, cherish the memory of their early instructress with respect and affection.

---

On Sunday, May 2, at Bridge Hill, Belper, JOHN STRUTT, Esq., aged 64. By the death of this truly excellent man, the Unitarian church has lost one of its most consistent and honourable members, and the district in which he resided been deprived of a liberal and cheerful supporter of every worthy object. Having received his early training under the Revds. E. Higginson, of Derby, and J. Tayler, of Nottingham, he entered as a lay student in Manchester College, York. At the end of his College course, he became actively engaged in the manufacturing establishment so successfully conducted by the Messrs. Strutt at Belper, and for many years had the superintendence of the bleaching department connected with their cotton-mills. Having amassed sufficient wealth wherewith to satisfy his moderate desires and to carry out the promptings of his kind disposition, he wisely retired from business a few years since, and thenceforward devoted himself to the improvement of his landed estate and the elevation of the people who resided on it. Thinking the condition of the poor is intimately connected with all social progress and national prosperity, he was anxious that the laws which affect their well-being should be justly administered, and for nearly twenty years presided, with great regularity and eminent ability, over the Board of Guardians for the Belper Union. By his love of order and adherence to principle, by his strict impartiality and uniform kindness, he secured the esteem both of the ratepayers and the applicants for parish relief. Of institutions for the aid of the sick and suffering he was a liberal supporter, and gladly encouraged every effort to communicate sound knowledge to the rising generation. All the schools in Belper, and many in the surrounding district, shared in his munificence. His charities were given in accordance with the precept of Christ, and only by Him who seeth in secret was it known how much, and how widely, he distributed of that wealth which, he rightly considered, was but entrusted to his stewardship to be wisely used.

Claiming the right to judge for himself what the Scriptures teach, without let or hindrance from priest or creed, he found in the simple doctrines of Unitarianism the principles which formed his character, which guided his life, which cheered his illness, and which hallowed his death. His unaffected piety and cheerful devotion were shewn by his regular attendance at the Unitarian chapel. Whenever worshipers assembled there to give praise to God for His many mercies, to supplicate His aid in the performance of duty, to gain acquaintance with the deep things of the spiritual world, and to renew and increase the reverence and affection which the disciple should feel for him who is the true way to eternal life, he was in his accustomed place, so long as health and strength permitted. The last time he left the house was to join with his fellow-communicants in partaking of the Lord's Supper. His attachment to the Unitarian chapel, and to the religious principles taught there, was warm and deep; and there, though silent in the tomb, he will long speak. His creed was that proposed by Christ for the acceptance of the young man who wanted to be saved; he loved God with all his heart and soul and strength, and his neighbour as himself. He exhibited in action the apostolic definition of pure and undefiled religion; the visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and keeping himself unspotted from the world. Living much among his fellow-men, taking an active part in all the great questions that affect the well-being of society, and having no wish to conceal any of his conduct from the most searching scrutiny, it is but stating the simple truth to say, that no one ever charged him with being guilty of a mean or unprincipled action. Even those whose bigotry led them to denounce his opinions, were compelled to acknowledge that his conduct was without reproach, and while they pronounced the soil bad, the seed bad, and the tree bad, they were constrained to admit that the fruit was good. The estimation in which he was held, by those who had the best means of knowing his real character, was shewn on the day of

his funeral, by the closing of all the shops in the town, and by the principal inhabitants following his remains to their last resting-place, and again on the Sunday by the crowded congregation that came to hear the funeral sermon preached in the Unitarian chapel, large numbers being unable to find even standing room, so general was the desire to pay the only tribute possible to his many sterling qualities. He was, in truth, a man of high, Christian principle,—a dutiful son, an affectionate brother, a firm friend, a generous master, an upright magistrate, a devout follower of his Saviour, an obedient servant of God. His amiability of temper, affability of manners, kindness of feeling, simplicity of heart, uprightness of conduct, and nobility of character, endeared him to all who knew him, and his many excellences and great worth will long live enshrined in their memories.

L. L.

---

May 6, at Moreton Hampstead, aged 63, Mr. Isaac Billett, rope-manufacturer. He became a resident of the place when a very young man, and during his entire career there was an intelligent and zealous adherent to the principles of Unitarian Christianity. At the Baptist chapel of which he was a member, he had been in the habit for many years of reading the hymns in the Sunday service. He passed away from life after a few days only of illness. Many of his fellow-townsmen of all classes attended his funeral to pay their tribute of respect to his memory; and his remains rest in the burial-ground attached to the chapel wherein he had been an habitual worshiper.

---

May 9, the Rev. James Wilkinson, of High Street, Rochdale, who for a period of upwards of forty-six years has ministered to the spiritual wants of the congregation connected with the Unitarian chapel, Clover Street, Rochdale. The respect in which he was held by his flock and by those who had the happiness to know the sterling worth of his character, was abundantly evinced by the manner in which his remains were conveyed to their last resting-place, on the Thursday following the day of his death. Upwards of one hundred of the members of his congregation, with other friends (male and female), led up the funeral procession, clad in deep mourning, and were followed by the hearse and two mourning conveyances containing the relatives and more immediate friends of the deceased. Amongst those who headed the procession were the Mayor of Rochdale, R. T. Heape, Esq.; his brother, Benjamin Heape, Esq.; the medical attendant of the deceased, Dr. Cox; the Revds. John Wright, B.A., of Bury, and Lindsey Taplin, of Todmorden; Mr. Ed. Manley, of Manchester, who, at the particular desire of the departed, officiated at the burial; and a number of other gentlemen of Rochdale, Todmorden, &c.

After the funeral, the members of the congregation and other friends of the deceased took tea together in the school-room of the chapel, and were addressed by R. T. Heape, Esq., the Mayor; Benjamin Heape, Esq.; Rev. L. Taplin; Messrs. Freeston, Harrison, Greenwood, Peel, Nutter, J. Clegg, E. Clegg, A. Hill, H. Hill, and a number of others, who all bore testimony to the great value of Mr. Wilkinson's character and services in the cause of Unitarian Christianity, and of the high esteem in which they held him personally.

The funeral sermon was preached by Mr. E. Manley, of Manchester, on the afternoon of Sunday, the 16th May, from 1 Cor. xv. 26, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." The congregation was a very attentive and crowded one, and consisted of upwards of 500 people of different religious persuasions, anxious to shew their last tribute of respect to the aged and departed minister and friend.

Mr. Wilkinson was born on the 6th of March, 1787, and had consequently reached his 72nd year. He was brought up to the trade of a shoemaker, and followed that occupation as a principal source of livelihood till nearly the close of his long and useful life. By the labour of his hands at his trade, he found means to bring up and support a rather numerous family. His wife died some twenty years ago, and three only of his children now survive to mourn the father's loss. His ministerial duties commenced in the year 1811, after the death of Mr. Joseph Cooke, whose secession from the Wesleyan Methodists in 1806, and whose establishment of a distinct congregation in Providence chapel, Rochdale, are fully and graphically described in Mr. John Ashworth's "Account of the Rise and Progress of the Unitarian Doctrine in the Societies at Rochdale, Newchurch in Rossendale, and other Places." Mr. Wilkinson was the young man mentioned at page 48 of that account, "whose assistance, considering the condition in which the congregations were left, was very opportune; he was cordially received, and made the second" [the other being the late Rev. James Taylor, of Rochdale and Todmorden] "that had begun to preach since Mr. Cooke's expulsion."

Mr. Cooke gave the first impulse to that freedom of thought and religious action

which characterized the people with whom Mr. Wilkinson thus associated himself. But it was not till after Mr. Cooke's death that the plain and simple views of Christianity as understood and expressed by "Unitarianism," began to dawn upon their minds. Having once freed themselves, however, from the shackles and trammels of orthodoxy, and made the Scriptures, and the Scriptures alone, the ruling guide of their lives and the test of religious truth, their path to the simple unity and fatherly character and goodness of God was clear and unmistakable, and their arrival at that goal rapid and certain. This is clearly shewn in the interesting narrative by Mr. J. Ashworth above referred to. We there learn that they became Unitarians without knowing it, or indeed without knowing that any other body of Christians besides themselves held the same or similar views of the Divine nature and character.

It is not to be supposed, however, that they could then adopt and preach these views without hindrance or molestation. Many were the difficulties and great the obloquy they had to encounter; and it was in the surmounting of these difficulties and the braving of this obloquy that the indomitable character and unflinching energies of Mr. Wilkinson were made conspicuous. One of the results of his and their persevering and untiring labours was the building of a new chapel at Clover Street, Rochdale, in the year 1818, for the worship of the one living and true God and the spread of Unitarian principles; the chapel built for Mr. Cooke in High Street having been taken away from them in 1811; and from that time to 1818 they had to hold their religious services principally in a small school-room situate in Drake Street.

Though *lessened*, their difficulties did not *end* with the erection of their new chapel. They were long encumbered with a considerable amount of debt, and though the services of their ministers were almost gratuitous, yet, being a congregation comparatively small in numbers and composed almost solely of working people, they were frequently involved in pecuniary embarrassments.

During many years, the ministerial duties were performed by Mr. Wilkinson conjointly with Mr. Taylor (then of Rochdale) and Mr. Ashworth of Newchurch. Fortnightly exchanges were made by Mr. Ashworth, alternately with Mr. Wilkinson and Mr. Taylor, so that at Rochdale Mr. Ashworth preached fortnightly, and Messrs. Wilkinson and Taylor monthly, or rather semi-fortnightly (if I may use the expression), one performing the service in the morning and the other in the afternoon, alternately, on those days Mr. Ashworth was absent.

We thus see that Mr. Wilkinson had to go to Newchurch once every month, a distance of eight miles, which he travelled almost invariably on foot and in all kinds of weather, and had always to preach three times,—morning and afternoon at Newchurch, and evening at some friend's house, miles in the country.

For upwards of twenty years did he perform this task (for task it was, and a hard one too). But his strong sense of duty and firm determination to accomplish his duty, enabled him to fulfil his engagements for the whole of that period, with scarce a single exception. His way lay over high hills and rough roads, and many have been the times when he has barely been able to reach his destination in time for preaching in consequence of the severity of the weather encountered on the way. Frequently had he to mount the pulpit bathed in profuse perspiration and dripping with wet. And many were the snow-storms in which he had to tramp knee-deep, and find his lonely way across the moor as he best could. And all this without fee or reward, save the approbation of his own conscience and the love of his God and his principles. Great indeed must have been his desire to propagate and make known what he considered right and just views of God and Christianity, and his wish to do good, to bear him up under such difficulties. Well may we exclaim, in these days of cheap and easy travelling, as well as comparative tolerance of Unitarian doctrines and teachings, that "our lines have indeed fallen in pleasant places." For in those times, not only had Mr. Wilkinson to contend with the physical difficulties above named, but to be an Unitarian, and *avow* it, then required some nerve, Unitarians being then looked upon, much more than now, as outcasts from the Christian vineyard, and as infidels to Christ. Their opinions were regarded with pious horror, and themselves treated by the more predominant and self-styled orthodox sects as mistaken and dangerous men, to be carefully shunned, and whom it would be the height of contamination to hold Christian communion with. Thank God, however, these things are now changed! Unitarian principles are now respected, and the eligibility of Unitarians themselves to the Christian name, character and privileges, much less reservedly admitted.

All these changes Mr. Wilkinson knew and experienced. He also lived to see his

constant and earnest prayer fulfilled in having the chapel with which he had been so long and so intimately connected *freed from debt*, and its prospect of usefulness for the future cheeringly enlarged. The fruit of his continued labour is now beginning to shew itself. The congregation is increased, and, as a whole, is regular and uniform in its attendance. A numerous and prosperous school is attached to the chapel, where the good seed is sown, and in which numbers of young and zealous teachers enter into their useful labours with that strong and earnest desire to do good which, sooner or later, must and will bear fruit. In addition, Mr. Wilkinson lived to see that means have been taken by which the cause he had so much at heart, and the duties of the place he so much loved, could still be carried on after his death with a prospect of increasing usefulness and success. And this knowledge greatly cheered him in his last moments, his greatest fear in life having been lest his long and arduous labours should be thrown away and his congregation be dispersed.

He continued his efforts in the pulpit much longer than was really advisable, in the very infirm state of his health for the last few months. But his wish was to preach as long as ever he was able. And he did so. Only the Sunday but one before he died he went over to Todmorden (where he occasionally occupied the pulpit, and where he was greatly respected) to pay the society a farewell visit, or, as he himself prophetically expressed it, "to preach his last sermon." It did indeed prove to be so. His own convictions of his failing strength and vigour were therefore evidently strong.

The extra exertion he had to make in thus visiting Todmorden, most probably operated in hastening his end; for, from the day of his return home, he gradually and rapidly grew worse. He felt that his time was come, and that his bodily frame was worn out. And he arranged and prepared accordingly.

He underwent much pain and suffering in the first few days of his illness; but, by the skilful and judicious treatment of his medical adviser, Dr. Cox, much of his pain and suffering was removed. However, a more rapid sinking of the constitution soon ensued. Yet his mind was calm and peaceful; and he bore his affliction with the meekness, resignation and fortitude of a true Christian. He had a full and perfect faith in the infinite goodness of his Creator, and in the merciful dispensations of a kind and overruling Providence. Not a murmur ever escaped his lips that his lot was a hard one, or that God had dealt unkindly with him. On the other hand, he blessed God for his goodness, and that He had enabled him to do what he had done, and said that if his life had to be spent over again, he could not wish to have spent it differently than he had. His faith in the soundness of the principles he had professed through so great a portion of his ministerial life, remained perfect to the last. A week previous to his decease, he received a visit from Dr. Beard, of Manchester, by whom he had been long known and highly valued as a simple and earnest Christian and a truly useful minister. Dr. Beard remained in conversation and religious exercises with Mr. Wilkinson for the space of an hour, and had ample evidence of the tranquillity of his mind and of his deep, strong and vivid faith. Often had he seen Mr. Wilkinson in active ministerial duties, and been edified by what he saw and heard; now, however, he learnt that his friend had effectually taught himself while teaching others, and been preparing for his last hour by consecrating his previous hours to God and Christ.

Only the day before his death, Mr. Wilkinson was visited by his loved and long-tried friend, Mr. R. T. Heape, and asked by him as to the state of his mind. Mr. Heape said—"Now, Mr. Wilkinson, you have apparently not long to live. You know it has been often said that Unitarian views of Christianity may do very well to *live* by, when all is bright and cheering, and when a long life appears before us, but that they will not do to *die* by." His reply was what might have been expected by all who really knew him. "Mr. Heape," said he (taking hold of his hand), "I have found them not only fit to *live* by, *but they are my great source of comfort and consolation* NOW."

From this time his strength rapidly declined, and he continued to grow weaker and weaker. On the morning of the day following Mr. Heape's visit, one of the students from the Home Missionary Board, Manchester (Mr. Street), who had been appointed to preach at Clover-Street chapel that day, called to see him, and the replies of Mr. Wilkinson to the questions put by Mr. Street were quite in unison with what he had previously expressed as to the perfect serenity and composure of his mind, and of his willingness and readiness to appear before his God.

Nature held up until about half-past twelve at noon, when it became evident his race was run, and that he was about to enter upon his reward. He died peacefully and quietly, and sunk as if falling

# MARRIAGES.

April 20, at St. Nicholas' Old meeting-house, Ipswich, by Rev. J. T. Cooper, Mr. Henry Carr to Miss J. A. Patrick.

April 25, at St. Nicholas' Old meeting-house, Ipswich, by Rev. J. T. Cooper, Mr. Robert Marsh to Miss M. Warren.

April 25, at the Old meeting-house, Bessel's Green, by Rev. John A. Briggs, George Deadman to Mary Blackstone, both of Oxford.

April 29, at the New Unitarian church, Hackney, by Rev. Dr. Sadler, of Hampstead, Mr. Thomas J. Briggs, of Dalston Lane, to Hannah Murray, youngest daughter of Edward Ford, Esq., of Laura Place, Clapton.

April 29, at Mill-Hill chapel, Leeds, by Rev. M. Gibson, brother-in-law of the bride, Frederick William, eldest son of James Kitson, of Little Woodhouse, Esq., to Hannah Ellen, daughter of George Talbot, of Burley, Esq.

May 1, at the Presbyterian chapel, Newbury, by Rev. R. Shelley, Mr. Samuel Hamblin to Miss Sarah Willis.

May 4, at the Unitarian chapel, Battle, by Rev. R. E. B. Maclellan, of Maidstone, Mr. William Edwards, of Northiam, to Elizabeth, daughter of Mr. John Burgess, of Battle.

May 10, at Stockwell-Gate chapel, Mansfield, by Rev. Benjamin Carpenter, Mr. John Franks, of Nottingham, to Ellen Elizabeth, second daughter of Mr. Birks, of Mansfield.

May 12, at the Unitarian chapel, Newchurch, by Rev. George Hoade, Mr. Wm. Eastwood to Miss Law, both of Newchurch.

May 12, at the Old chapel, Dukinfield, by Rev. R. Brook Aspland, M.A., Mr. William Pitt, of Dukinfield, to Hannah, daughter of the late Mr. M. Rogers.

May 12, at the Unitarian chapel, Upper Brook Street, Manchester, by Rev. J. H. Hutton, B.A., Percy, eldest son of W. R. Greg, Esq., to Emma, eldest daughter of Robert Martin, Esq., both of Manchester.

May 18, at the General Baptist chapel, Eastgate Square, Chichester, by Rev. Samuel Martin, of Trowbridge, the Rev. John Hill, minister of the above chapel, to Miss Charlotte Nelson Wright, of Hornet House, Chichester. The chapel was very tastefully decorated for the occasion; the children of the Sunday-school, with bouquets in their hands, lined the aisles.

May 19, at Maidstone, by Rev. George Harris, of Newcastle-on-Tyne (uncle of the bride), Mr. James Hawkins Sayer, of Barnet, to Susan, second daughter of Chas. Ellis, Esq., of Maidstone.

# NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We have enlarged our No. by some pages this month in order to give insertion to hasty reports (but as full as time will allow) of the interesting Anniversaries, but have still found ourselves compelled to shut out many interesting articles of Review and Intelligence. We particularly regret that we cannot insert the short-hand writer's notes of the discussion that took place at the Anniversary of the British and Foreign School Society. Mr. Tagart and Mr. Preston are entitled to the thanks of the Unitarian body for their assertion of justice and truth on that occasion. These periodical appearances of our advocates are doing manifest good.

We entirely agree with our correspondent, *An Inquirer*, in the opinions he expresses; but as his article is a criticism on a statement reported in the pages of another periodical, we are precluded by our rule from giving it admittance.

*After this month*, our correspondents will oblige by directing their communications to *Rev. R. Brook Aspland, Frampton Villas, Well Street, Hackney, London*, N.E.